

LOVE and AVARICE:

OR, THE

Fatal EFFECTS of preferring
WEALTH to BEAUTY.

Exemplified in the

History of a Young GENTLEMAN of
Fortune and TWO LADIES, to both
of whom he was married; to the first
for LOVE, and to the other for her
MONEY; and the unhappy Conse-
quences the Knowledge of it produc'd.

Interpers'd with a Variety of entertaining Incidents;
particularly the Manner in which the First LADY
was induc'd to part with her Honour; how she
persuaded him to marry her privately, and by
what Means she was brought to consent to his
matching with another; and their living together
afterwards, 'till the whole Affair became pub-
lick.

By a LADY of SHROPSHIRE.

L O N D O N:

Printed for T. WARD in the Old-Baily, 1748.

LOVE and AVARICE:

OR, THE

FATAL EFFECTS OF PROSECUTING
WEALTH TO BEAUTY.

Exemplified in the

HISTORY of a YOUNG GENTLEMAN of
FORTUNE and TWO LADIES, in part
of whom he was married; to the first
for LOVE, and to the other for
MONEY; and the unhappy Consequences
thence arising of it produced.



Interpreted with a view to the
particulars the manner in which the first Lady
was induced to part with her Fortune, how she
persecuted him to marry her private, and by
what means she was brought to confine to his
travelling with another, and their living together
eventually till the whole Affair became dis-
tasteful.

BY A LADY of SHROPSHIRE.

LONDON.

Printed by T. WARD in the Old Bailey.

The PREFACE

TO the young Ladies, who are single, and whose Hearts, as well as their Fortunes, are yet in their own Possession, the following Sheets are peculiarly devoted. The Happiness or Misery of the future Part of their Lives depends frequently on the first Step they make in the Dance of Love. The Heart then glows, the Blood gallops, the Spirits are all in a Flutter, and the whole Frame of Nature is in Motion; so that Reason, no longer able to hold the Reins, resigns to Passion; Passion keeps no Guard, but exposes her Charge to all the Approaches and Assaults of the Enemy. The Wiles of Men are infinite; and tho' a Woman be never so much upon the Watch, yet it's not impossible but she may be surpriz'd. However, that she may have nothing to charge herself with for neglecting the Care of her own Welfare and Felicity, let her, before she absolutely and unalterably fixes

her Affections, well consider and examine the Object which she has in her Eye, and get all the Evidence she can, as well from his Friends as his Enemies, from his known Behaviour and general Character, from every Thing and Circumstance that can give her Satisfaction, whether he is such as her kind Opinion has form'd of him. If after all this Caution and Circumspection, she yet finds herself deceiv'd (which by the way, very rarely happens) she will bear the Disappointment with the less Vexation, as she cannot accuse herself with the Omission of any Thing in her Power to prevent it.

But, alas! far different is the Conduct of the Generality of our Ladies, especially of those who are under no Restraint from Parents or Guardians. They seldom look beyond the Person that presents himself to their Service. If that happens to strike in with their Humour, they seek no farther, but imagine that all his other Qualities are suitable to the Appearance he makes; and the usual Maxim they go upon is, I will please my Eye, if I plague my Heart; but woeful Experience often teaches them the Falsity of this Rule; and they repent, when Repentance

penitance can do them no Service, that they did not hearken to the Voice of Reason, as well as the Calls of Love, or consult some faithful Friend on so interested an Occasion.

Too much Credulity in the Woman on one Side, and too much Avarice and Subtlety in the Man, on the other, gave Birth to those terrible Misfortunes, Troubles and Anxieties, that are the Subjects of this History. A History, indeed, it should be call'd, because the Persons therein mention'd are real, and the Facts related true, as can be testified by a Multitude of Witnesses who live in the Neighbourhood of the Scene of Action. But I have given it the Air of a Novel, the better to conceal from the Notice of the World, the real Actors in this Tragedy, who are Persons of considerable Note in the Country where they live. For tho' the Crimes here described, deserv'd to be expos'd, yet, possibly, the Criminal may be sufficiently punish'd by his own Conscience, and the melancholy Reflections which the Commission of such atrocious Wickedness must occasion in a Mind the least dispos'd to Goodness. I would likewise avoid as much as it is possible, to aggravate the Afflictions of suffering Virtue.

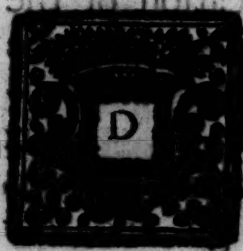
Virtue, or by the Repetition of Names to irritate the Passions of those who have been unhappily involv'd in this monstrous Scene of Treachery and Villainy.

I shall conclude with a Word of Advice to the Parties concerned; first to him who has been the chief Instrument in procuring, and the principal Agent in laying such a Train of Sorrow and Affliction for the Innocent and Unwary, to testify his Contrition for his Offences by making all Reparation in his Power to the Injur'd. To those who have so severely suffer'd by his wicked Arts and villainous Practices I would recommend Temper and Resignation, and to consider that they may aggravate, but cannot lessen their Misfortunes by too intense Reflections on what is past. Both Parties I would persuade to Peace and Reconciliation; at least, that they would agree to bury Things past Remedy in Oblivion, and not expose themselves to the further Censure of the World, by engaging in expensive Law-Suits, which will benefit Nobody but the Lawyers.

LOVE and AVARICE!

OR, THE

Effects of preferring Wealth to Beauty.



DIVINE *Astrea*! whose Abode is now with the Gods, how delightful appear'd the Face of the Earth, how pleasant the Prospect of the Heavens, how amiable the Society of Men, whilst Thou, Goddess fair, wast pleas'd to make this terrestrial Globe the Place of thy Residence? But since thy Departure, (occasion'd by the innumerable Affronts offer'd to thy Divinity by the wretched Race of sinful Mortals) this World is become a Desert of wild Beasts, preying upon one another, as if the Earth did not produce a Sufficiency for every Individual of its Inhabitants. Fraud, Deceit, Violence, Injustice, and Rapine, with every Vice and Folly that disgrace the Human Nature, and the Dignity of a rational Being, have defaced the pristine Glory of the Universe, and thrown

a dismal Veil over all its Beauties. Men give a Loose to every Passion, and that which pleases best is deemed just, however contrary to the moral Nature of Right and Wrong. Interest is become the governing Principle among Men, and an unbounded Gratification of the Propensions of Nature, has left the Women little more than the bare Profession of Virtue to boast of. This might be verified in the innumerable Instances taken both from high and low Life; but I shall content myself with producing one of the first Kind, which will abundantly prove the Truth of the foregoing Observations; and by which it will appear, that when a Man or Woman is resolved to indulge their Passions, no other Considerations, human or divine, are suffered to take Place.

In the West of *England* lived, and still lives *Clodio*, a young Gentleman of a handsome Fortune, which would be increased greatly upon the Death of his Father. As *Clodio* was born to great Expectations, his Education was suitable to his Hopes. His Father had been always in Trade; and he carefully instructed his Son in those Branches of it which he himself had been principally concern'd

concern'd in ; thus he eas'd himself of a great Part of the Load of Business, and transferr'd it to his Son. *Clodio* was Chief in all Things; for his Talents being naturally turned for Trade, and himself of a parsimonious Temper, his Father confided in him for the Management of all his Concerns. By this Means a great deal of Money running continually thro' his Hands, he became at length so enamour'd with it, that he resolv'd it should be the Bias of all his Actions and Designs for the future Part of his Life.

The Love of Money is the Root of all Evil, as the Proverb very truly affirms; for it produces such a Narrowness in a Man's Principles, that he seldom or ever extends his Views beyond himself. He makes himself the Center of his Love, his Benefits, and all his Dealings and Transactions with Mankind; as if he thought himself born for no other End but to enrich and aggrandize his own particular Person at the Expence of the rest of his Species. This Turn of Mind naturally begets a Sourness of Temper, a Moroseness in Manners, and a Disregard to the Welfare of all others. Self-Interest prevailing above all other Con-

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siderations,

siderations, detaches him from the Interest and Service of his Fellow Creatures; the Good of the Publick, and the Well-being of Society, have no Share in his Concern; for his principal Care is, that he himself may be happy, however it fare with the rest of the World.

Clodio was this Man: For tho' Covetousness rarely takes Possession of Youth, yet that he might be an Original in all Respects, an inordinate Desire of amassing Riches, in him, was the most predominant Passion, even from his Cradle. And this by Degrees became so habitual to him, that nothing merited his least Regard, which did not some Way or other advance his Interest. Nearness of Blood, and the Ties of Affinity were like Threads of Flax before a Candle, if not strengthened by Arguments of much greater Importance to himself than what the Laws of Nature have made. Even Love, which subdues the Mighty, which subjects the King and the Peasant, the Warrior and the Advocate, the Hero and the Squire, equally to his Yoke, has no Power to soften the Ruggedness of *Clodio's* Nature, nor can find a Moment's Mansion

in his narrow Soul, which is fill'd with nothing but Ideas of Gain, and *Cent. per Cent.* written upon every Foliage of his Heart. Even Beauty itself, with all its melting Train of Charms and Graces, is unable to dissolve his obdurate Prepossession for Riches; and whenever Fortune throws such a lovely Object in his Way, he must be courted to embrace the Charmer, and that upon such Conditions as shall not in the least interfere with his much dearer and more agreeable Mammon.

Clodio thus unsociable in his Temper, had but little Respect shewn him by the Gentlemen of *Wiltshire*, where was his paternal Inheritance, more than his Wealth challeng'd for him. This, indeed, gave him but little Uneasiness, for as he did not place his Felicity in the Pleasures of Friendship, or familiar Intercourse with Society, he never gave himself any Trouble about People's Opinion of him. From this Picture of the Man, one may easily judge what Sort of a Figure he made in his Amours.

But notwithstanding this natural Churlishness of *Clodio*, he was often visited by his Relations, I mean those of the better Sort, whom he always treated

very handsomely, knowing he should be as well receiv'd whenever he return'd the Visit. Among others of his Visitants, his Cousin *Melissa* frequently paid him her Respects, and sometimes staid with him Weeks and Months together.

Melissa was a young Lady of a good Family in *Shropshire*, possess'd of the most agreeable Accomplishments; and tho' she could not challenge the first Place at the Table of Beauty, yet she had something in her Face that gave the Beholder more Delight than even Beauty itself. Her Charms did not proceed so much from the Regularity of her Features as from the pleasant Air of her Countenance, which her good Humour and natural Disposition to smile, continually diffus'd over it. Thus, without studying the Art of captivating Admirers, she had more of them than those Ladies who make it the whole Practice of their Lives. Her Heart was as susceptible of the tender Flame, as her Eyes were capable of darting it into others. But it was her hard Fate to place her Affections on one, who was, and ever will be an utter Stranger to the soft and generous Passion of Love. Wealth is the only Divinity he pays his Adorations

to; Wealth is the *Summum Bonum*; and Wealth alone the ultimate End of all his Wishes. Poor *Melissa*! Hard is thy Case, and deserves our Pity! Little didst thou then think, what a Series of Sorrows and Troubles would be the sad Consequence of this thy unlucky Choice! But, instructed by thy Miseries, thou has learn'd, that when the Love of Riches has taken Possession of the Heart of Man, no other Object, however beautiful or lovely it be, can find Admission there.

It was in the Year 1734, that *Melissa* (who was but then lately enter'd into her Teens) came to *Sidbury*, where *Clodio* then was on a Visit to his Grandmother, and here began their first Intimacy. ——— One Night being all at their Devotions, and attentive to the Prayers which he read over, suddenly a Skriek was heard, and the Fall of a Person upon the Floor. The Family was alarm'd, and *Clodio* instantly starting up, soon perceiv'd that his Cousin *Melissa* was taken with an hysterick Fit. All Hands were immediately employed in procuring her Relief, which they did in about the Space of an Hour; her disordered Spirits return'd, and the

Rose in her Cheek, which was faded into a tarnish'd Wan, recover'd its pristine Bloom. Every Body was glad to see her reviv'd. This, however, was but of short Continuance, for she soon fell into another Fit; and perceiving the Symptoms of it coming fast upon her, and imagining she should immediately die, terrifi'd at the dreadful Apprehension, she cried out, *Dear Cousin, farewell, — Death has seiz'd me — I feel his cold Hand at my Heart — I can no more —* Clodio was infinitely surpriz'd, and her Brother *Frederico*, who happened to be present at the same Time, was no less shock'd at the Accident. *Fred.* indeed, who was but a Youth, was very vociferous in his Lamentations, and fill'd the whole House with his Outcries; which sensibly affected his Sister in the Intervals of her Fits, of which she had several, tho' never any before that Time. *Clodio* indeed, acted with much more Composure, tho' he was much grieved for her as a Relation, and a good-natur'd agreeable Girl, and therefore advis'd to put her to Bed, as a Place much fitter for her Condition. This was accordingly done, and her Fits gradually shortening, at length wholly left her.

But it must be observ'd, that when *Melissa* was the most violently agitated by her Fits, she often called out upon her Cousin *Clodio*, and utter'd Expressions, tho' perfectly incoherent, yet of such a Nature, as convinc'd the old Lady *Artossa*, *Clodio's* Grandmother, that her Cousin *Melissa* was certainly in Love with her Grandson, and that the Passions of Love, Shame and Pride, struggling hard for Superiority in her Cousin's Breast, had made such a Havock in her Spirits, as to leave her expos'd to all the Frailties of a female Nature, which always acts in Extremes. *Artossa*, knowing the Inequality of *Melissa's* Fortune to that of *Clodio's*, consider'd in what Manner she should put a Stop to the further Progress of this Amour. She knew too well the Nature of Woman to believe that any Advice she could give *Melissa* would be regarded. She therefore applies herself to her Grandson, whose Avarice she was perswaded would be a perpetual Balance to any ill-judg'd Proposal of Marriage. She tells him her Suspicions of *Melissa's* Passion for him, puts him in mind of his former Promise, that he would never marry a Woman of a small Fortune, and

and insists on his Assurance, that he would never make *Melissa* his Wife. *Clodio* without any Hesitation, gave his Grandmother the Satisfaction she desired. He, however, was so sordidly bent upon the Pursuit of his Interest, that if *Artossa* had not interpos'd her Authority, he would never have hearken'd to any Proposal that should have clash'd with it.

Let us now return to *Melissa*, whom we left recovering from her Fits, which had so exhausted her Spirits, that when they were quite gone, she yet found herself very weak, low and faint; and *Clodio* apprehending that they might bring some more fatal Disorder upon her, advis'd the Exercise of Riding.

But I should have mention'd another Incident which confirm'd *Artossa* in the Persuasion, that her Cousin *Melissa's* Illness proceeded from the Violence of her Love for her Grandson, which was this. When the Agony of her Fits was somewhat abated, she suddenly seiz'd on *Clodio's* Hand, as he sat by her Bed-side, and clapping it to her Side, cried out with some Vehemence, *it is here, it is here*, and held it there for some Time; at length he gently drawing it away, she

she again laid hold of it, and putting it to the same Place, said in a more soft and languishing Tone, *it is here, it is here*; soon after a kindly Warmth diffus'd itself over her Hands, Breasts, and whole Body, the Colour return'd to her Cheeks, and she began to speak pretty chearfully.

The next Day, pursuant to *Clodio's* Advice, he, *Melissa*, and her Brother *Fred.* took Horses, and rode out; and this Exercise they continued for several Days successively; till *Melissa* had quite recover'd her Health. Soon after all three of them took a Journey to *London*, *Clodio* on Business of his own, and *Fred.* and his Sister to see their Father, who then resided in that City.

Clodio, who ever had in Mind his Grandmother's Advice, which he resolv'd to pursue to a Tittle, took particular Care to avoid every Opportunity that might encourage *Melissa* to believe, that he had any more than a common Regard for her as a Relation. In Consequence of which, he seldom or ever took her to a Play with him, unless it were in Company with her Father and Brother, and scarce ever paid her a Visit all the Time they were in *London*. Nay,
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when her Father went out of Town, and left her at *Clodio's* Uncle's, where *Clodio* himself then lodg'd, in order to perfect herself in the Art of Dancing, which she had been some Time learning, *Clodio* never once took her abroad, to partake of the Diversions of the Season, even tho' he spent the greatest Part of his Time in some kind of Amusements or other.

Melissa, however, was greatly chagrind at this distant Behaviour of *Clodio*. If she might have had her Will, she would never have been out of his Company; yet she was very careful, that neither her Words, Actions, or Conduct, might discover the secret Anguish of her Heart. But who, in Love, can forbear betraying some Symptoms of it? *Clodio's* Aunt, who was not ignorant of the Frailties of her Sex, took Notice of some peculiar Circumstances in *Melissa's* Behaviour, which induc'd her to believe, that her Kinsman's Carriage was not indifferent to her. Her Suspicion was much increas'd, when *Melissa*, by an Order from her Father, was required to go into the Country before the Departure of *Clodio*. She lamented her Unhappiness in being oblig'd to leave

London

London, to go to *Lincoln* among her Friends and Relations, altho' she was well assur'd that she should be there highly caress'd, and enjoy all the Pleasures of the Country. She pretended, however, that the Reason of her Uneasiness was, her being oblig'd to leave the good Company of *Clodio's* Aunt, who had us'd her with the greatest Tenderness and Civility. But this Pretence was too thin-spun to blind the Eyes of the old Lady, who easily perceived by the frequent Heavings of *Melissa's* Bosom, the deep-fetch'd Sighs, the Tears that often trickled down her Cheeks, when she suppos'd she was not observ'd, and the pleasant Humour she was always in, when *Clodio* was the Subject of their Discourse, that her Concern was occasion'd by the Necessity of parting with that dear Object of all her Wishes.

But go she must; and *Clodio* was so complaisant as to wait on her to the Inn where she was to take Coach. Here they waited two Hours before her Brother *Fred.* came to them. *Clodio* was not a little vex'd in his Mind, and thought every Minute an Age till he was releas'd from her Company, but this was

her own Contrivance that she might enjoy the Pleasure of his Conversation, which she did not expect again for a great while to come; and perhaps with an Expectation too that he would say something that might allay the raging Fever of her Love. But *Clodio* was too wary to be caught in the Snare; and turn'd the Drift of his Conversation upon indifferent Things, except now and then mixing a Kiss with his Discourse; but not a Word of Love.

It is very certain, that *Clodio* was no Stranger to *Melissa's* Passion for him; which he was assur'd of, not only by his Aunt, who had gather'd so much from her Behaviour in *London*, but likewise from several Circumstances of her Conduct while they liv'd together at *Sidbury*. One Day as *Clodio* and she sat in the Parlour together, chatting about trifling Affairs, she happened to have her Hand in his, when; at that Instant his Grandmother came into the Room; but *Melissa* did not offer to withdraw it, but dropping her Handkerchief, prevented the old Lady's seeing the Conjunction of their Hands, which was a plain Proof that she had no Dislike to the Thing.

Another Instance of *Melissa's* Affection for *Clodio* was this. *Melissa* is naturally of a gay debonair Humour, and used such Familiarities with those she could take the Freedom, as some grave People would think inconsistent with the strict Rules of Modesty, but in her might pass well enough for Levity of Temper. This she had Wit enough to improve to her own Advantage, and under Colour of this free Humour, used often to ask *Clodio* to lay his Hand upon her Breasts, and to press them hard, because it would make them grow; for as she was then but very young, she was mighty desirous of appearing with all the Qualifications of a full grown Lady, and so entitle her to the Esteem of *Clodio*, for whom she entertain'd, even so early, the most passionate Regard. How ingenious is Love, that can assume all Shapes, to disguise the real Sentiments of the Heart!

Artossa, *Clodio's* Grandmother, who had been perfectly inform'd of *Melissa's* Behaviour during her Stay in *London*, as soon as she had left that City, wrote him the following Letter.

Dear Grandchild,

YOUR Aunt has acquainted me with her Suspicions, that your Cousin *Melissa* is deeply in Love with you, with the several Circumstances that convinc'd her, that *Melissa* regretted nothing so much as her parting with you when her Father order'd her into the Country. I formerly told you my own Thoughts upon the same Head, and you then gave me your solemn Promise, that you would never marry her, or any other Lady, without my Consent. I was satisfied; but I know so well the Lures, Deceits, and Practices of my own Sex, when inspired by the Passion of Love, and assisted by Opportunity and Intimacy, that you will excuse my Fears and Apprehensions, lest you should, by her female Wiles, have engaged in a Contract which you must be sensible is diametrically opposite to your Interest. Her Fortune is but a Trifle in Comparison to your Expectations. Will you then suffer the Bauble Love to stand in Competition with that Wealth and Splendor which you are sure to

' to possess, if you marry a Lady of
 ' equal Opulence? Remember, that
 ' Riches bring a thousand Conveniencies
 ' with them, and will command Hap-
 ' piness, when Love, united with Po-
 ' verty, lives destitute of every Pleasure
 ' but what it finds in its own unenvied,
 ' tho' perhaps pitied Condition. Who
 ' would embrace Misery, when Felicity
 ' is in their Option? Who would prefer
 ' a trifling and momentary Bliss for sub-
 ' stantial and continued Happiness? Let
 ' not Passion blind you, but let your
 ' own Interest be always the first and
 ' principal Object in your Eyes. Drive,
 ' then, *Melissa*, from your Thoughts,
 ' and, as much as possible, from your
 ' Sight. Never be in her Company,
 ' but when in Company with others.
 ' If you have plighted her any Vows
 ' (which I hope in God you have not),
 ' consider it as a rash Action, and made
 ' without due Consideration, and there-
 ' fore much better broken than kept.
 ' But I shall defer my farther Advice till
 ' I am entirely satisfied, under your
 ' own Hand, whether my Fears and
 ' Suspicions are well or ill-grounded.
 ' I am, &c.

Artossa.

Clodio answer'd *Artossa's* Letter in the following Terms.

Madam,

As I am perfectly free from the Anxieties of the amorous Passion, I can the more readily give you the Satisfaction you request in your Letter. Although I pay the highest Deference to your Admonitions, which I am sensible proceed from a pure Regard for my Welfare, yet you will excuse me when I say, that the Trouble and Uneasiness which you give yourself, is altogether groundless and unnecessary. It's very possible, nay, I believe it's highly probable, that *Melissa* has been Fool enough to entertain a kind Regard for me; but I assure you without the least Encouragement on my Part. So far from it, that I have taken every Opportunity to convince her that her Affections are ill-plac'd, and that I should never make her any suitable Return. This, I say, she herself must be sensible of, from the constant Indifference I have shewn on every Instance of her Fondness for me; and am determin'd that my future Behaviour shall perfectly correspond with

with my former; I would not be guilty of downright Rudeness, but if nothing else will stop the Progress of her Folly, that, I am determin'd, shall be the Method I will take to cure it.

It is, however, in a great Measure, in your own Power, to prevent the troublesome Consequences of an Affair which gives you so much Uneasiness; and that is, by not inviting her to your House at *Sidbury*, when you know I shall be there. But be it how it will, assure yourself, I shall be always careful to act consistent with my own Interest and your Advice.

I am, &c.

Clodio.

Artossa being perfectly satisfied by *Clodio's* Letter, that he had engag'd in no Contract of Marriage with *Melissa*, nor ever would, gave herself no Trouble about the Consequences which might follow on permitting *Melissa* to be again in his Company; and therefore as she was an agreeable Companion, invited her to *Sidbury*, tho' she knew *Clodio* would certainly be there at the same Time, and so it happen'd; for he was no sooner

at his Grandmother's than he was welcom'd by his Cousin *Melissa*, whom he found in good Health: But the Renewal of the Object soon reviv'd the Flame in her Heart, which his long Absence had more than half smother'd in Oblivion; but now broke out again, and rag'd with more Fury than ever. But cruel Custom, and the natural Modesty of her Sex, obliging her to conceal the corroding Anguish, it prey'd inwardly upon her Spirits to such a Degree, that her Colour faded like a Flower untimely cropp'd, her Flesh wasted, and she was reduc'd almost to a Shadow. The Physician put in Practice all the Rules of his Art to restore her to Health; but in the whole Compass of the *Materia Medica* there is no Drug to be found of sufficient Efficacy for the Cure of Love; no Recipe on the Apothecary's File that prescribes a Remedy for a Fever in the Mind. The Doctor declar'd, that the Cause of her Distemper was past his Penetration, and therefore not in his Power to give her any Relief; and indeed nothing that he did for her had any good Effect; her Distemper daily increas'd, so that, in fine, she was brought to the very Brink of the Grave.

Clodio, hard-hearted as he was, yet thought it not prudent to give Room for a popular Clamour, that a young Lady of *Melissa's* Merit had perish'd by his Cruelty; and therefore consulting with his Grandmother *Artossa* what was to be done on this Emergency, it was concluded between them, that, in order to remove *Melissa's* Illness, which they knew proceeded from no other Cause but the Violence of her Passion for him, he should pretend a reciprocal Return of Love, and even to promise her Marriage; which, if it should produce the desired Effect by restoring her Health, that then he should think no more of the Matter, but use her with his former Indifference.

Pursuant to this cruel and inhuman Advice, *Clodio* takes the first Opportunity of addressing *Melissa* in such Terms as these: *Melissa*, said he, it grieves me to the Soul to see you in this declining Condition. What is the Reason of this continual Decay of your Health? If I am not deceiv'd, your Disorder lies more in the Mind than in the Body. Tell me what it is that afflicts you; and if it be in my Power to remove it, assure yourself that nothing shall be wanting on

my Part to restore Health to your Body, and Peace and Tranquillity to your Mind.

Alas! *Clodio*, answer'd *Melissa*, I am not worth your Care; Death will shortly clasp me in his cold Embraces, and the Grave will hide this poor shatter'd Carcass from your offended Eyes. I am not unsensible how troublesome my Company has been to you for some Time; but have a little Patience, and I, miserable Wretch as I am, shall no more disturb the serene Calm of your Life; no more shall my Folly give you Uneasiness; nor my unhappy Fondness any longer occasion Sights and Contempts which I have not merited at your Hands, nor have I Patience to support.

A Flood of Tears prevented her from proceeding any farther; which *Clodio* perceiving, took her in his Arms, embrac'd her tenderly, kiss'd away the Tears from her Eyes, and express'd himself in the most passionate Language of the sincerest Lover. My dear *Melissa*, said he, pardon this severe Trial which I have constrain'd myself to make of your Love. It gave me the greatest Affliction to see you pine and languish

to observe the Bloom of your Youth fading, and that Mirth and Cheerfulness of your Temper, which ever gave Pleasure to all about you, clouded with Melancholy, and sunk in a silent and solitary Reserve: But when I consider'd that it was wholly in my Power to satisfy your Complaints and redress your suppos'd Wrongs, I reserv'd the Remedy, which I intended to apply, to that critical Moment, when I was perswaded it would most effectually answer the Purpose. That Moment is the present, and I do most solemnly promise in the Presence of those Powers who take Vengeance on those who are guilty of breaking their Vows, and of swearing to that which they never intend to perform, that you, and no other Woman so long as you shall live, shall be my lawful Wife, and that I will marry you as soon as the Circumstances of my private Affairs will permit. But as you are no Stranger to the Arguments which at present oppose this conjugal Conjunction of our Hands, tho' it never shall that of our Hearts, I shall only beg your Patience till Things have a more towardly Aspect.

Declaration for *a propos* to her own Heart's Desire; and her Love fondly persuading her that his Protestations were sincere, made him this Reply. My dear *Clodio*, said she, what you have now declar'd has given me the Satisfaction which I have long wanted. I can now tell you, that I love you more than ever Woman lov'd; and that the Fear of seeing you, the Delight of my Eyes, and the Jewel of my Soul, in the Possession of another, has been the sole Cause of all the Illness under which you have seen me languish, and which would, in a very short Time, have sent me to my Grave. But your Words have sooth'd my drooping Spirits, dropp'd Balm into my wounded Heart, and given new Life and Vigour to a poor miserable Being, almost exhausted and worn out with sleepless Nights and anxious Days. Yet let me conjure you by all the Powers that punish injur'd Love, by your Honour, and by the Faith of a Gentleman, that you do not deceive me. 'Tis true, I am a weak, frail, helpless Woman, and, perhaps, too readily confide in Promises tho' made with such Solemnity; yet, *Clodio*, think that should you break through

those Vows and Oaths which you have now so solemnly made, if made only with a View to impose upon my Credulity, that the Event may be more disastrous than you at present imagine, both to you and me. But I cannot, I will not suppose you capable of such a base, ungenerous Procedure, but indulge myself in the pleasing Thoughts of being, one Day, the sole Possessor of your Person, as you declare I am of your Heart.

Clodio again took her in his Arms, and renew'd his Vows of everlasting Fidelity; which produc'd the Effect he intended, namely, of recovering *Melissa* from that deep Melancholy to which she had, for some Time, entirely resign'd herself. That dismal Gloom which so long had sat heavy on her desponding Soul, was dissipated in a Moment; Mirth and Chearfulness again took Possession of her Tongue and Visage; the rosy Bloom of Youth soon resum'd its Throne in her lovely Aspect; and active Health re-invigorated her beauteous Frame throughout; the Graces sat laughing in her Cheeks, and the Loves in her Eyes; and all were pleas'd, yet wonder'd, to see this sudden and agreeable

able Alteration in *Melissa's* State of Health.

Clodio having thus happily effected the Cure of his Cousin, tho' firmly resolv'd within himself never to fulfil his Engagements to her, took Horse, and went to *London*. The Summer being now far spent, and the Winter approaching, the Leaf falling apace, and the Verdure of the Earth turn'd to a russet-brown, and consequently the Pleasures of the Season pretty well over; *Melissa* prevail'd on her Father to permit her once more to go to *London*, where, during the Winter, she might perfect herself in Dancing, which she pretended she had not Time to do when she was there before, and to divert herself with the Variety of Company and Amusements of the Town, of which the Country was quite destitute. This was her Pretence, tho' Love was the real Motive of her Request. Her Father, willing to gratify her Inclinations in every Thing, for he lov'd her tenderly, readily granted her Desire. Accordingly she came to *London*, and lodg'd at her Aunt's, as she had done before.

Clodio, who knew nothing of her Arrival, accidentally calling there, was surpriz'd

priz'd to see his Cousin *Melissa*, who, he imagin'd, was safe enough at *Sidbury*. But, far from being pleas'd at the Encounter, he soon gave her to understand, by his scornful Look, what kind of Entertainment she was to expect from him. He had scarce Civility enough to observe common Decency, or to pay her the Complements usual at the Meeting of Friends. *Melissa* was deeply affected with this surly Behaviour, and as she lov'd him to Distraction, the greater was her Vexation at being treated with such ill Manners and inhuman Usage. *Melissa* being excessively shock'd at *Clodio's* uncourtly Demeanor, began to consider, whether she had not by some foolish Action or Error in her Conduct, unwittingly incurr'd his Displeasure. But on the strictest Examination of every Action and Passage of her Life, finding no Manner of Reason to charge herself with Misbehaviour, she again consider'd what might be the real Grounds of this his perfidious Dealing with her. But she was not long at a Loss for the true Cause. She recollected the desperate Condition she was in at *Sidbury*, when every Body despair'd of her Life; that

Clodio knowing that the true Cause of her Illness was an Excess of Love for him, had given her those Assurances of a reciprocal Passion on his Part, and made those solemn Protestations of his Resolution to marry her, only with a View to recover her from that bad State of Health which she had foolishly reduced herself to; which being by this Means restor'd, his Purpose was answer'd, and he gave himself no farther Trouble about her. Being now convinc'd, that this, and no other, was the real Grounds of his contemptuous Carriage towards her, her Thoughts were so distracted, and her Soul was so violently agitated with the different Passions of Love, Anger and Despair, that had she not given them a Vent in Exclamations against the perfidious Villain, the Author of her Misfortunes, she must inevitably have sunk under the Weight of her Oppression. — Good Heav'n! said she, in the Agony of her Grief, what horrible Crime have I committed to deserve so severe a Punishment? Why am I cursed with the Plague of Love for a Man who has not Generosity enough to use me with common Civility

vility? A Wretch who knows no Happiness but in heaping up Riches! Who has no Passion inconsistent with his Avarice! Who can be ravish'd with no Felicity, of which his Interest is not the principal Ingredient! Beauty has no Charms, because it is not of a golden Hue. Oaths and Vows, tho' made with the greatest Solemnity, are no more than Ropes of Sand, when Mammon requires him to break them. What a Wretch is this to be made the Object of Love! What a Wretch am I to place my Affections upon him! Surely some Tygress was thy Mother, whose savage Milk has diffus'd such a Brutishness thro' thy Nature, that thou wantest only the Figure to denominate thee of that barbarous Species of Animals. Ah! miserable me! that am doom'd to love a Man whom I know to be a Villain; one who has already given me the most shocking Instances of his Perfidy. Have I Reason to expect better Treatment at his Hands? No; his Heart is impenetrable as an Adamant. The soft Passion of Love, which is felt by every living Kind of the Creation, can make no Impression upon him. Ah! why was I born with those Softnesses in

my Nature, those tender Emotions which have made me the most wretched of my Sex? Hard is my Fate! Destin'd to be in Love with my Ruin, and voluntarily to embrace Destruction! For I find, I feel it is impossible for me to stifle my Passion, or cure my Tenderness for this Monster of Barbarity; and I must love him, tho' he spurn me from him as he would a Toad that offends his Sight. Pride, the usual Refuge of my Sex on such Occasions, yields me no Relief; for, spite of my strongest Resolutions, I perceive I am, and shall be his wretched, miserable Captive.

Thus was poor *Melissa* distracted with the Tempest that raged in her Breast. Sometimes she resolv'd never to see him more, and begun to pack up her Cloaths to go into the Country, and there to hide herself for ever from his Sight; but long she did not continue in that Mind; other Thoughts soon took Possession of her, and some Glimmerings of Hope determin'd her to try other Methods to bring over to her Lure this haughty Scornor, this ungenerous Despiser of her proffer'd Love. At length she resolves to expostulate the Matter with

with him, and to know, from his own Mouth, the worst of her Destiny. Accordingly she took the first Opportunity of seeing him at his own Lodging, and having desired some private Conversation with him, she spoke to him in the following Terms. *Clodio*, said she, your brutish unmanly Behaviour to me, has almost broke my Heart; nor can I any longer bear your Scorn, without demanding your Reason for this cruel, undeserved Usage. You are but too well acquainted with the Foible of my Soul, and that makes you triumph in my Misery; but mean and ungenerous is that Triumph, which has no other Object for its Insult but a Woman's Weakness. But I need not seek far for the Cause of your Unkindness; I am but too sensible, that the Oaths and solemn Promises you made to marry me, were only Sugar-plums to please me, when you apprehended my Life was in Danger. But, wou'd to God I had then died; for then I should not have felt the piercing Sorrows, and the pungent Anguish of Heart which your cruel Usage has brought upon me; nor would you have the villainous Crime of Perjury to answer

swer for. However, since I perceive it is your fix'd Resolution to break those solemn Engagements, this shall be the last Time that I will trouble you with my Frailties. Nay more; to ease your Conscience of that Load of Guilt, with which the atrocious Sin of Perjury, may, one Time or other, burden it, I will give you back your Promise of Marriage, and your solemn Vows and Oaths to perform that Contract, and will immediately set out for *Lincoln*; where I will bury myself from your Sight, and never, if possible, think of you more; and all I ask in Return, is only that you will treat me with common Civility, while my Occasions oblige me to stay in Town.

Clodio, in Reply, told her, that he was very sorry for her Sake, that she had unhappily plac'd her Affections on one who was so ill able to make her a suitable Return; that she had judg'd very right in imputing the Reason of his engaging by Promise to marry her, to the Desire he had of restoring her decay'd Health; that he was oblig'd to her for giving him back his Promise, which he verily believ'd he should never have kept,

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for Reasons too obvious and well known to her to be repeated; that notwithstanding, he should still have an Esteem for her, as well on Account of her personal Merit, as the Relation and Nearness of Blood that was betwixt them; assur'd her that his future Behaviour should be such as she should have no Reason to find Fault with; begg'd her to compose her troubled Mind; and, lastly, commended her Resolution of retiring to *Lincoln*, and there patiently wait the Event of Things, which might possibly turn out more in her Favour, than she could at present apprehend.

Melissa, tho' she was but little satisfied with *Clodio's* Answer, yet smother'd her Resentment as well as she could; and without pressing him for any farther Explanation of his Mind, took her Leave, and went back to her Aunt's, and soon after set out in the Stage-Coach for *Lincoln*. But Love, when it has once taken Possession of the Heart, is not easily dispossessed. Good Company, and a Variety of Amusements, may serve to divert or allay other Ailments; but this is an Ill that eats like a Gangrene, and is seldom or ever cur'd, but
by

by Death, or the Fruition of the Object desir'd. Thus, tho' *Melissa* was got amongst her Friends and Relations, and enjoyed all the Pleasures the Country could afford, yet her Passion for *Clodio* abated not, but was rather increased by Distance and Absence. Company was rather a Trouble than a Relief to her Mind; and the Diversions of the Country she partook of indeed, in Complaisance to her Friends, but never enjoy'd with the least Degree of Pleasure. When others were sleeping in their Beds, and every Creature gone to Rest, many a solitary Walk did she take in the neighbouring Groves, ruminating on the Ingratitude of Man, and the Un-towardness of her Fate, and with a kind of pensive Pleasure heard the Love-labour'd Song of the warbling Nightingal, whose Notes seem'd to echo the Language of her Heart. But this rather serv'd to sooth than extinguish the Flame that rag'd in her Love-sick Soul; and after she had tired herself with pouring out her unavailing Complaints to the breezing Winds that hover'd among the Trees, to the Moon the silent Witness of her Sighs and Sorrows, and to the Silver

Silver Streams that gently murmur'd
 along the Side of the Grove, she turn'd
 her unwilling Steps towards her Cham-
 ber; but in vain she besought the God of
 Slumber to close her Eyes to Rest; the
 Bed was no Place of Repose for her;
 and when her Spirits, over-press'd with
 the Troubles of her labouring Mind,
 were hush'd to Sleep, yet still the Fancy
 was awake, and frightful Dreams di-
 sturb'd her discomposed Soul. Sleeping,
 her Fancy presented *Glodio* to her Eyes,
 who with fierce Look, bid her renounce
 all Claims to him, or soon he'd make
 her an Example of his Vengeance.
 Wak'd with the horrid Vision, still she
 thought him present, and still with lour-
 ing Looks to threaten her Destruction.
 Amaze and Terror seiz'd her frighten'd
 Soul, and cold deadly Drops of Sweat
 distill'd from every Pore of her fair
 lovely Limbs. Night after Night thus
 harass'd, thus fatigu'd, and Light and
 Day all cheerless to her Eyes, even Life
 itself became a Burden insupportable,
 and Death desired as the greatest Blessing
 Heav'n could send her.

But Strength and Nature could not
 long support this Excess of Grief and
 F Trouble

Trouble; a grievous Fever seiz'd her, and according to the Judgment of her Friends, as well as Physicians, she wou'd soon be free'd from all the Torments both of Mind and Body. Her Fever brought on a *Delirium*, and the Fancy still working on the Object which had caused all her Trouble, mov'd her Tongue to utter such Things as plainly discover'd the Origin of her present Illness. Nor Care nor Skill was wanting to remove the Distemper; and being assisted by her Youth, and the Strength of Nature, was at length pretty well, tho' not perfectly accomplish'd. For the Violence of the Disease had brought her so very low, that it was a long Time before she recover'd Strength enough to walk; so that it was thought adviseable, for the perfecting her Health, to try a Change of Air. Her Aunt *Artossa*, having heard of her dangerous Sickness, and understanding she was on the Recovery, invited her to come to *Sidbury*. *Melissa* accepted the Invitation, and the more willingly, as she should again have a Sight of her dear perfidious *Clodio*. For, tho' she had already suffer'd so much on his Account, yet, so incomprehensible
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are the Ways of Love, she was still desirous of another Interview, tho' she was morally assur'd she should find no Alteration in his Sentiments with respect to her. Yet often pondering upon the last Words he spoke when they parted in *London*, that " She should patiently wait the Event of Things, which might possibly turn out more in her Favour than she apprehended," she at length work'd herself into a Belief, that there was still a Blessing in Store for her, and that there was even a Possibility that she should, some Time or other, be happy in her *Clodio's* Love; and as a drowning Man will catch at the smallest Twigg to save himself, so *Melissa* buoy'd up her Spirits with this very weak Ground of Hope, conceiv'd from this doubtful Expression, even against Hope itself, and the strongest Arguments to dissuage her from believing that she should ever have the least Share in his Affections; for he had only thrown in this Word of uncertain Comfort to sweeten the Bitter convey'd in the former Part of his Discourse, which might have driven her to the last Extremities.

Melissa had not been long at *Sidbury*

before *Clodio*, who imagin'd she was still at *Lincoln*, came there likewise, on a Visit to his Grandmother *Artossa*, to whom he frequently paid his Respects, as he expected a considerable Addition to his Fortune upon her Demise. *Clodio* was surpriz'd to see *Melissa* there, behav'd to her with his usual Indifference for some Time, and privately expostulated with his Grandmother, why she, knowing *Melissa's* Frailty and foolish Fondness for him, which had already produc'd such bad Effects, would give fresh Ocasion for the Revival of a disastrous Passion, which Absence and Length of Time might have totally extinguish'd. *Artossa* answer'd, that it was in pure Pity and Compassion to her Cousin's low and weak Condition to which Sickness had reduc'd her, that she had invited her to *Sidbury*, as believing that the Change of Air might contribute much to the Restoration of her Health: Which she having now pretty well recovered, and already suffered so much for her Folly, she would undoubtedly be very cautious for the future how she again brought herself under such terrible Dilemmas; and that therefore, he might behave

behave to her in what Manner he pleas'd without apprehending any bad Consequences. *Clodio*, however, was of a different Opinion, being fully perswaded that Love can never be cured by Repulse, but rather that Repulses, too often repeated, may turn it to a confirm'd Hatred, which often ends in some horrible Stroke of Revenge; and therefore resolves to alter his Conduct, and behave to *Melissa* in another Manner than he had hitherto done. It was not long before he perceiv'd that her Passion for him was as strong as ever; for whenever his Business call'd him to go to his Seat at *Pinkney*, or elsewhere, he never left her but in an exceeding good State of Health, yet on his Return he was sure to find her in a declining Condition, but quickly recover'd at Sight of him.

Clodio revolving in his Mind this unhappy Foible of his Cousin *Melissa*, and that if he did not content her in some Shape or other, the Consequence might be fatal, either to her or him, or both; at last determin'd to treat her with Gentleness and Complacency, and to humour her in her own Way. Accordingly he takes an Opportunity of talking to her

her in this Manner. *Melissa*, said he, why dost thou thus torment and afflict thyself for one who has made thee so ill Returns for all thy kind Regards to him? The Constancy of thy Love, maugre the ungenerous Treatment thou hast met with, as much surpasses my Praise, as it does my Ability to deserve it. Thy Merits may justly entitle thee to a much better Fortune and more Happiness than it is in my Power to bestow. I own myself a Bankrupt in Love, and not able to pay the tenth Part of that Debt, which Honour and thy virtuous, tho' much abus'd Affection, requires of me. Hitherto thou hast met with nothing but Affronts and Repulses, in return for the most passionate and tender Sentiments in my Favour; for which I may be justly deem'd the most ungrateful Monster that breathes upon the Earth. However, I do not despair of retrieving yours, as well as the good Opinion of Mankind: But as you are no Stranger to the Rubs and Difficulties that obstruct the full Consummation of our mutual Wishes, prithee propose some Method to enable me to gratify thy Desires, without hurting my own Interest.

Ay, there, says *Melissa*, there's the Rock on which all my Happiness has, and must be wreck'd. You could love me dearly, it seems, if I had but more Money. O the Curse of Wealth! that everlasting Bane to the Joys of Love! Why did Nature give me this Softness, this Tenderneſs of Soul, and Fortune deny me the Ability to command my Choice? You ask me to propose a Method of reconciling Love and Fortune. That is not in my Power; I wish it was; for you should soon see, if the Balance of Riches was on my Side, that not Meanness of Circumstances, nor Poverty itself, should hinder me from marrying the Man I love. Nay, I should glory in the Opportunity of making him happy in my Wealth, whom I thought worthy of a Place in my Heart. You allow that my Constancy, as well as my Sufferings deserve some Regard; but be assured, that nothing can satisfy Love, but the Fruition of the Object belov'd. If that is denied, in vain do we wrack Invention for other Expedients. If I am never to possess your Person, fruitless and insignificant are all your other Schemes; the Grave only shall be my
 Refuge

Refuge; which will hide me for ever from the Face of ungrateful, perjur'd Man, and the Curse of slighted Love.

Having said this, she burst into a Flood of Tears, bewailing her unhappy wayward Fate, which had doom'd her to more Misery than any of her Sex had ever felt. *Clodio* pitying, or at least counterfeiting a great Concern for the Distress and Anguish of her Soul, took her in his Arms, kiss'd and embrac'd her, professing she should do with him as she pleas'd, and that she should never have Reason to complain of his Usage more; desir'd only her Patience for a while, till Time and Opportunity should furnish him with Means to compleat their Happiness in the free and mutual Enjoyment of each other.

Love is apt to be over-credulous, and too ready to believe what it wishes to be true. *Melissa* not doubting his Veracity, again clear'd up her clouded Brow, and suffer'd herself to be once more deceiv'd by his fallacious Promises. The Melancholy, which always seiz'd upon her Spirits during his Absence, gave Place to her jocund and chearful Humour, and she could be as pleasant in Company, tho'

tho' he was an hundred Miles off, as she was when he was always in her Sight.

Nine Times the Sun had run his annual Course, since first *Melissa* had fix'd her Love on *Clodio*; neither did Time, Affronts, Repulses, Cruelty, Sicknes, or Disappointments, one Jot abate the Ardor of her Passion. Vain and fruitless was the Courtship of several young Gentlemen of Birth and Fortune, who wou'd have thought themselves happy in the Possession of a Lady of such rare Merit and so many good Qualities; nor Person nor Fortune could tempt her to withdraw her Affections from *Clodio*, tho' she had so little Grounds to hope, that he would ever make her his Wife.

At a Place called *Coton*, not many Miles from *Sidbury*, liv'd a young Gentleman, whom we shall call *Amintor*; who, tho' not very agreeable in his Person, yet was of an affable Temper, and possess'd of a plentiful Estate. By his Neighbourhood to *Sidbury*, he was intimate with *Artossa* and her Family, and consequently with *Clodio*. This Acquaintance was cultivated by a reciprocal Correspondence for a considerable Time; Visits were paid and receiv'd,

and *Clodio* and *Amintor* were generally Companions in Hunting and other Country Diversions. By this Means *Amintor* had frequent Opportunities of seeing and conversing with *Melissa*; and he was so taken with her mild and gentle Temper, the Vivacity of her Wit, the Agreeableness of her Conversation, her modest Behaviour, and a thousand other good Qualities with which she was accomplish'd; that, notwithstanding the Inequality of her Fortune, he thought there was not another Woman in the World that could make him so happy as *Melissa*. After some Consultation with himself, he resolves to make his Addresses to her in the Way of Courtship. Accordingly he takes an Opportunity to open to her the Purpose of his Heart, and to solicit her Love upon honourable Terms. The Reception he met with was unexpectedly cold, and her Behaviour unusually shy and reserv'd. On which he applies to *Artessa*, who, he imagin'd, might have over-aw'd *Melissa* to refuse any Offer till it first had her Approbation. But finding *Artessa* likewise averse to the Proposal, he apprehended that, possibly, there might be some

some nuptial Contract betwixt *Clodio* and *Melissa*. He was confirm'd in this Suspicion when, afterwards, he observ'd some Familiarities that pass'd between them. Being fully persuaded that this was the Case, he gave over all farther Thoughts of Courtship, and resign'd her, in his Mind, entirely to *Clodio*; yet retain'd the same Respect for her he had before: But as we shall have frequent Occasion to call him upon the Stage again, we shall leave him at present, to prosecute the Story of *Clodio* and *Melissa*.

This Proposal of *Amintor's* was made when *Clodio* was absent at *Pinkney*; but he was no sooner return'd, than *Melissa* acquainted him with the whole Affair, and every Circumstance that had pass'd on the Occasion. *Clodio* seem'd perfectly satisfied with the Offer that had been made her, and advis'd her by all Means to accept of it; as it was the fairest Opportunity she could ever expect of making herself happy for Life; for *Amintor's* Estate was very large, and there was no Doubt but he would make a handsome Settlement upon her. But this wholesome Advice was far from
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being

being relish'd by *Melissa*, who could not bear the Thoughts of such an absolute Separation from *Clodio*, as this would necessarily make; and therefore entreated him, if he had any Regard for her Repose, the Peace and Quiet of her Mind, or the Health of her Body, that he would not press her to a Thing so repugnant to her Inclination, and destructive of her Happiness; that it was impossible for her to transfer her Love from him who had long been the only Object of it; and for whose Sake she had suffer'd so much, to another, who had nothing to recommend him to her Choice, but the Largeness of his Fortune, which was not a sufficient Equivalent for the Imperfections she could easily discern in his Person. Alas! added she, what have I done, that you should again throw me from your Arms? Call my Conduct to the strictest Account, and tell me wherein I am blameable, unless it be in loving you too much. That indeed is a Fault, and yet I must own myself a most incorrigible Sinner, for I can never repent of it. Why will you thus spurn me from you? Why must I always meet with this cruel Treatment

Treatment? If you are really wearied with this troublesome Passion of mine, there is an easy Way to put an End to it at once. Draw your Sword, and pierce this wretched Heart. I will, freely forgive you; nay more; I will give it you under my Hand, that you did it at my own most earnest Request. This I had rather suffer a thousand Times over, if it were possible, than be everlastingly treated with Scorn and Contempt.

This Storm was followed by a Shower of Tears, which, like Drops of Pearl, rowl'd down her lovely Cheeks; and Sighs, uncall'd, deep-fetch'd, enough to pierce the Hearer's Heart, broke from her troubled Breast. *Clodio* beheld her wretched Plight, and secretly despis'd her female Weakness; but as he knew Corrosives would provoke and irritate her Passion, he sought to calm her Mind with Words of Gentleness and Pity. My dear *Melissa*, said he, why will you thus afflict and torment yourself with Surmises that have no Foundation but in your own Fancy? In proposing *Amintor* to your Choice, I only try'd the Firmness of your Attachment to me; and since I find your Faith inviolable

violable, depend upon my solemn Promise, that I shall always make your Happiness the Care and Study of my Life. Therefore compose your Mind to Peace, and let your troubled Soul return to its usual Serenity. Be persuaded of the Sincerity of my Love, and that no other Object shall have Place in my Heart so long as you and I shall live.

Melissa was pacified, and soon resum'd her usual Cheerfulness. But these frequent Returns of her passionate and jealous Fits greatly embarrass'd *Clodio*, and reduc'd him to this Dilemma, that he must either marry *Melissa*, and thereby frustrate all his Expectations of advancing his Fortune by Marriage; or by making his Addresses to a Lady of Opulence, abandon poor *Melissa* to Despair and Death. No middle Way could he perceive; he must either break thro' all his Vows and Promises to her, or those he made to his Grandmother *Artossa*, never to make her his Wife; either entirely to quit those ambitious Views which his Avarice had pointed out, or confine himself to the Limits of his own paternal Inheritance, merely to humour the Fondness of a sickly Girl.

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Some Time he continued irresolute and undetermin'd what Course to take. 'Tis true, he was but a young Man, a Libertine in his Principles, and had been concern'd enough with the female Sex to know, that, generally speaking, their ruling Passion is the gratifying of their natural Inclination for Man. Being got into this Train of thinking, he consider'd whether he could not cure his love-sick Mistress by a Prescription not mix'd with the nauseous Ingredient of Matrimony. Well, but suppose she should consent to an Offer of this Kind, what will be the Consequence? If she should be pregnant, what will become of us then? I shall bring the Clamour and Indignation perhaps of her Brothers and Relations upon me, and no doubt, incur the Censure of my own, and, possibly hurt my private and personal Interest by it, which I would not do for the finest Woman in the World, so meant is my Opinion of the whole Sex. 'Tis true, such of my Friends as think rightly, will reckon it no more than an Act of Gallantry, and impute it to the Redundancy of Youth and Vigour, which will not bear the Curb of Reason and prudential

prudential Foresight. As to the Clamour that will be rais'd against me by the moral Part of Mankind, that will be so well counter-ballanc'd by the general Laugh of the Young and the Vicious of both Sexes, which by far outnumber the Honest and Virtuous, that I have but little to apprehend from that Quarter. Well, be it how it will, I will try the Experiment, and give myself no Trouble about the Issue.

Soon after this *Clodio* invited his Grandmother *Artossa* to go with him to his Seat at *Pinkney*, and *Melissa* to bear her Company. To *Pinkney* they all come, where *Clodio* design'd to put in practice the Scheme he had before concerted. *Melissa's* Health was much impair'd by the frequent Returns of Illness, occasion'd by his morose and surly Behaviour; from which she was as often recover'd by a few Words of Comfort from him. *Clodio* had carried it with great Indifference for some Time, which made her exceeding melancholy and low-spirited. To give her some Relief, *Artossa* took her out with her for an Airing in the Coach. On their Return, *Clodio* met them at the Gate, and as they

they were walking towards the Houſe he obſerv'd *Meliſſa* to ſtagger and ready to fall, catch'd her in his Arms, and carried her up Stairs to her Chamber; where being alone with her, he kiſs'd and embrac'd her with much Tendernels. My Dear, ſaid he, I am greatly concern'd at your frequent Indispoſitions. Yet, if you will be rul'd by me, you ſhall ſoon be cur'd of all your Ailments. Let me lay with you but one Night, and if the next Morning you ſhall declare that you are not pleas'd with my Method of Practice, never try me again; but I am ſo well aſſured of Succeſs, and that your inconstant State of Health will be ſo much mended by it, that you will have the higheſt Opinion both of the Operation, and the Operator.

Meliſſa was ſo ſurpriz'd at this ſudden and unexpected Declaration of *Clodio*, that ſhe knew not, for ſome Time, what to ſay, or in what Manner to ſhape her Answer. *Clodio*, interpreting this Silence for her Conſent, immediately prepar'd to come to Bed to her; but at that Inſtant a Servant came up to tell him, that ſome Gentlemen who were juſt came in, deſir'd his Company; this Meſſenger was

soon follow'd by another; at last his Grandmother came up on the same Errand, so that he was forc'd to quit his Purpose at that Time.

When the Company was gone, *Clodio* began to reflect seriously upon what had pass'd betwixt *Melissa* and him; and the more he thought of it, the less he approved of what he had done; and therefore as soon as he was up the next Morning, he took Horse, and rode to a Relation of his who liv'd at some Miles Distance from *Pinkney*; where he staid till the Sunday following, and then return'd home, and it being customary with him to post and settle his Books on that Day, he no sooner arriv'd than he sat down, and was very busy at it, when *Melissa*, hearing where he was, came into the Room, and plac'd herself in a Chair by him. He took no Notice of her; which so provok'd her, that she started up, flung out of the Room, and so up Stairs to her Chamber; where she staid but a few Minutes, and then came down again, and coming into the Compting-house, seated herself as before; still *Clodio* kept his Eyes on his Books, as if he minded nothing else, yet observ'd all her

her Motions; and was resolv'd that he would not be the first to break Silence, but see the Effects of her present Humour. *Melissa*, however, could hold out no longer, but burst into such passionate Expressions as these. What a strange unaccountable Girl am I! What little Regard have I to my Reputation! What will the World think of me! Nay, what can you, *Clodio*, judge of me, but as a thoughtless, silly, forward Wench, fond of the Men, and behaving without that Decency and Decorum so laudable and becoming in our Sex? I am ashamed of my Folly, yet know not how to make an Apology for it. *Clodio* would hear no more, but starting from his Desk, stopp'd her Mouth with Kisses, and told her he believ'd she was the most virtuous Girl in the World, and never did, nor would entertain an ill Thought of her; that her Conduct was in every Respect irreproachable, and that he thought himself the happiest Man living in being the Object of her kind Regard. The Coach that Instant stopping at the Gate, being just then come from Church, put an End to his Rhapsody, or, it's likely, he had given her some

substantial Proofs of what Stamp his Affection for her was.

This happen'd in the Spring of the Year, and *Melissa*, by the Means of *Clodio's* good Offices, recover'd from that Illness likewise. The Summer following, *Clodio's* Uncle at *London* came to see him at *Pinkney*. On his Departure *Clodio* and *Melissa*, bore him Company part of the Way on his Journey; and after they had travell'd some few Miles, took their Leave, and turn'd back homeward. As they rode in the Chariot together, *Melissa* thought this a fair Opportunity of disclosing her Mind to him more at large than she had hitherto done. *Clodio*, said she, how long will you keep me in Suspence? Many Years have pass'd (an Age in Love's Account) since first you swore to make me happy to my Wish. Must I still languish under the same Uncertainty? Shall I recount to you my Sufferings, Anxieties, the vexatious and cruel Usage that I have borne at your Hands? Have I, think you, yet suffer'd enough? Or am I still reserv'd to be the Mark for Calumny to point her scornful Finger at? You only are the Di-
rector

rector of my Fate. My Life and Death
 are purely in the Power of your Tongue.
 Delay no longer to pronounce my Doom.
 You see how much my Health is im-
 pair'd by the frequent Return of my Dis-
 orders, nor are you ignorant of the
 Cause that brings them on me. O do
 not prolong my Misery, nor make me
 suffer a Death a thousand Times before
 his fatal final Dart shall end this brittle
 Frame at once. Often have you said,
 you lov'd me dearly; I most earnestly
 entreat but this one Instance of it; Tell
 me sincerely, equivocate no longer, but
 in plain Terms declare what is your
 real Design. You know too well how
 much I am in your Power; but it is un-
 generous, and unworthy a Man of
 Honour, to treat even his Slave with
 Inhumanity, only because he can. 'Tis
 reckon'd cruel, and a Mark of a savage
 Disposition, to torture an Animal that
 offends you not. Am I then baser than
 a Slave, or of less Value than a Brute,
 that you thus dally with my Misery?
 Have so much Pity on me, as to put an
 End to this wretched Being at once, or
 raise me to Life, and give me a Hap-
 piness worth living to enjoy. Here
 Sighs

Sighs and Tears interrupted her Words, and she could proceed no farther.

Clodio was not a little affected with this pathetick Expostulation, which drew from him this Answer. My Angel, my better Genius, thou charming lovely Fair, said he, I confess my Fault, I own I am to blame, and that thy Constancy has merited much better Usage from me. I am not insensible of thy Sufferings, nor of the Cause from whence they proceeded; and I doubt not, but if you will hearken to the Proposal which I have now to make, but all your Disorders, as well of your Mind as Body, will be soon remov'd, and you as happy as yourself can wish. I really am, and ought to be asham'd, that any worldly Consideration, should prevent me from compleating the nuptial Tie with a Lady whose Merit might entitle her to the greatest Fortune, and whose Fidelity to me has been unparalell'd. But such is my wayward Fate, that the Ambition of my Friends and Relations will not suffer me to marry beneath myself, as they foolishly term it; and if I do not take their Approbation in the Choice of a Wife, I must forfeit all my Expectations from

from their Favour. This, and this only, you are sensible, has been the Reason why I have so long suspended the Completion of our mutual Desires. But I have now thought of a Way to answer both our Intentions, without the Inconveniencies that will attend the Formality of a publick Marriage. Permit me the Enjoyment of your Person, and I here solemnly protest and swear by and before him who revenges the Wrongs of the Injur'd, and may his Thunders blast my perjur'd Soul, whenever I forswear myself, that if your Pregnancy should be the Consequence of my Embraces, I will then marry you in the most solemn and publick Manner that you yourself shall direct or desire. But if it should prove otherwise, and we enjoy the Sweets of Love without its bitter Fruits, this only Favour will I ask, that you will not, by any Means, obstruct the Advancement of my Fortune by marrying some other Lady of Wealth and Opulence. If you'll comply with this Proposal, I here promise you on my Faith and Honour, that whenever such an Event shall happen, you still shall share my Love, my Person, and my Fortune

*Direct to Lord Arundel
By a Gentleman of mine*

Fortune; you still shall enjoy the Rights of a Wife, tho' the Church and ceremonious Custom give the Title to another.

And so, said *Melissa*, I am to be your Concubine, or secondary Wife, and share you in Partnership with another. This was a Practice which I think *Moses* allow'd the *Jews*; and I have read somewhere that the *Turks* and *Chinese* have a Custom not much unlike it: But I fear it ill agrees with the Laws and Customs of our own Country, or the Rules and Ordinances of our Church; but I am not Casuist enough to determine whether it be consistent, or not, with the Laws of Nature and of God, which I take to be the same. Now, if I should err in this dubious Point (as a silly weak Woman may easily do) I hope it will be imputed to the Excess of Love, which so blinded my Reason, that I could not make the proper Distinctions betwixt Truth and Error. But should I comply with your Proposal, which indeed I find but too strong an Inclination to do, and I should put my Reputation wholly in your Power, perhaps you will think it a Bauble not worth your keep-

ing

ing, and make it the standing Jest of your Conversation. This and a thousand other Difficulties I ought to raise, and insist on being remov'd, before I give my Consent to your Proposal. But instead of requiring such an Ecclaireissement as this, as a Preliminary to my signing the Treaty, I find I have got a Traitor in the Garrison, who will treacherously deliver up the Fort without suffering me to capitulate. But since I yield myself up to your Conquest, use your Victory with Discretion. You have yourself propos'd the Terms of our Agreement; which, tho' my Reason may not approve, yet my Love accepts, and will religiously perform; and I expect as exact and punctual an Observance on your Part. This *Clodio* again promis'd he would do, imprecating the worst of Curses on himself, if e're he deviated a Tittle from the Terms which he himself had offer'd, and she so generously consented to accept.

As Affairs being thus settled and adjusted betwixt them, and *Clodio's* Purpose rightly understood, the next Subject of their Consultation was, how to conceal their future Actions from the Eye and Sus-

picion of *Artossa*; for should she catch
 them in their secret and stolen Pleasures,
 such a Clamour would be rais'd against
 them both, as might prove fatal to their
 propos'd Felicity. This to prevent, it
 behov'd them to act with all imaginable
 Circumspection. *Clodio* observ'd, that as
 she (*Melissa*) had constantly a Bedfellow,
 and seldom out of *Artossa's* Company all
 Day, it would be difficult to accomplish
 their Purpose unobserv'd. But Love,
 ever fruitful in Invention, inspir'd *Me-*
lissa with this Expedient. You know,
 said she, that *Artossa* every Night re-
 tires to her Closet, where she spends an
 Hour at her Devotions. This Hour we
 can employ with all imaginable Secrecy
 in the full Fruition of our mutual Plea-
 sures. At the End of the long Gallery,
 you may remember there is a little Room
 seldom or ever frequented but when a
 Stranger visits us; and no body having
 any Business there, we shall never be in-
 terrupted by any of the Family. I ap-
 plaud your Thought, says *Clodio*, and
 Five To-morrow Evening shall be the
 Hour of our Meeting.

During this Interval, great was the
 Struggle in *Melissa's* Breast between de-
 clining

flining Virtue and vigorous Inclination, the Laws of Honour, and the Commands of Love. Fain would she have reconcil'd the mighty Variance. Her own Sentiments indeed, declar'd in her Favour, and even Conscience itself was silent; but then the Opinion of the World, and loud-mouth'd Fame oppos'd her strongly. For she was sensible, that if it was once known, or even suspected, that she had submitted to the Solicitations of her Lover, yet so ill-natur'd is the ill-judging World, that no Apology, no Excuse could be made, to atone for the Frailties of Nature, and the Force of Love, but Obloquy's foul Dirt must ever stain her Character. These uneasy Reflections stagger'd her Resolution, and kept her in Suspence, till the very Moment of the Appointment.

Clodio, however, was not the least embarrass'd with any such Scruples; but at the Hour of Five, having first seen *Artossa* retire to her Closet, he went directly to the little Room with eager Expectation to find *Melissa* there ready to receive him, and to return him Love for Love; but he was not a little disappointed at the Frustration of his pro-

mis'd Hopes, nor could guess the Reason of this sudden Alteration of her Mind. Leaving the Place, he went directly to the Parlour, where he found her sitting pensively thoughtful, and ask'd her why she had not perform'd her Promise, and kept the Appointment she had made him at that Hour? She fairly answer'd she was afraid of the Consequences, and begg'd he'd give her a little Time to consider of it. He reply'd, Take your own Time, and so immediately withdrew.

Nothing very material pass'd betwixt them for a considerable Time afterwards. *Melissa* however, was very uneasy in her Mind, from an Apprehension, that she had too much disoblig'd her Lover in refusing him a Meeting in the little Room according to Agreement. In order therefore to give herself some Relief, and to keep *Clodio* from entirely falling off from her, she bethought herself of this Expedient. It was *Clodio's* Custom to come home pretty exactly at a certain Hour every Evening. At such Times she took it in her Head to walk in the Piazza facing the Bowling Green, till she saw him coming, and then joining him, they walk'd, toy'd, and prattled together

together till Bed-time, unobserv'd by any Body. This Practice they continued for about a Month, amusing themselves with amorous Chit-chat, intermix'd with Kisses, and pleasant Tales of Love, till the Change of Weather, and the Approach of Winter oblig'd 'em to break off their Evening Conversations.

About the same Time *Melissa* had the melancholy News brought her of the Death of her Father, which so nearly affected her, that it threw her into another Fit of Illness, of which however she was so generous as entirely to acquit *Clodio* of being the Cause. Indeed, this was the only Illness that she did not impute to his Brutality and ill Usage of her. *Clodio*, in this Sickness, behav'd to her with great Tenderness and Humanity; which, with the Assistance of the Physician, pretty well restor'd her to her former Health. But she was hardly recover'd, before an unlucky Accident threw her into a worse Condition than she was before. *Clodia* was intimate with a certain Nobleman whom we shall call Lord *Dorio*. His Lordship happen'd to be in Company with a young Lady of excellent Endowments both of Mind
and

and Body, and possess'd of a large Fortune. This Lady his Lordship thought would be an exceeding good Match for his Friend *Clodio*, and accordingly advertis'd him of it by Letter, expatiating largely in her Praise, and requesting his Answer. *Clodio*, on the Receipt of this Letter, consider'd what he had best to do. He remember'd his Engagements with *Melissa*, and thought this was a proper Occasion to prove the Strength of her Love, and try whether she was able to perform her Promise, of sharing his Person in Partnership with another Woman. Having debated the Matter with himself, he resolves to shew her the Letter; which he accordingly did, without Preface or Apology, or any Comment upon it, and silently waited her Answer. But what Tongue can express, what Pen describe the Perturbation which the Reading of this Letter threw her into? Her Soul became instantly like a troubled Sea, impetuously driven to and fro, by the Violence of a furious Storm. Agitated by a Multitude of contending Passions, her Reason no longer kept the Helm, and every gentle Sentiment was banish'd

banish'd from her Mind. She rav'd, she tore her Hair, and gave up every Sense to the Mis-rule of Passion. *Clodio* said all he could to pacify and calm her Soul. But her Resentment was then too strong to suffer any Abatement; which had such an Effect on the Weakness of her Body, not perfectly recover'd from her late illness, that it threw her into a violent Fever, which produc'd a *Delirium*, accompanied with terrible Convulsions. Again she was confin'd to her Bed, a piteous Spectacle to all her Friends, who were ready to do every Thing in their Power for her Relief. But vain were all their Endeavours to assist her; none but *Clodio* had the salutary Skill to give her Ease; For even in her most raving Fits, when Sense and Reason seem'd quite absorb'd and lost in her Disease, yet no sooner did she hear the Voice of *Clodio* speaking to her, but her troubled discomposed Soul was in a Moment calm'd, and every Sense resum'd its proper Office. His Presence brought her Ease and Peace of Mind, which she scarce ever had when he was absent. Whenever therefore her convulsive Fits return'd, *Clodio* was sent for, for he
alone:

alone, as all her Friends observ'd, administer'd Relief. In this deplorable Condition long she lay, and sixteen Nights and Days she pass'd without one Wink of Sleep, or any Intervals of Ease, but such as *Clodio's* Words and cordial Kisses gave her. He perceiving the good Effects his Tenderness produc'd, offer'd once more to consummate their Bliss in the Enjoyment of her Person, as the best and only Means to perfect her Recovery. *Melissa*, notwithstanding her passionate Fondness for him, had still some Prudence left, and therefore return'd him Answer, That possibly what he propos'd might be of Service to regain her Health; yet that if she agreed to it, she easily foresaw, she should put herself so absolutely in his Power, that upon any Turn of his fickle Humour, or the Prospect of increasing his Fortune by a more advantageous Match, she should be left to the Regret of her own egregious Folly in giving up her Honour without insisting on a Compensation, or so much as capitulating for a future Subsistence, when it was more than probable, that she should be then abandon'd by all her Friends, and perhaps expos'd to the want
of

of the Necessaries of Life, and her Children, if she should be so unfortunate as to have any, be forc'd to wander thro' the World, and live on common Charity. No, *Clodio*, added she, Love, strong and powerful tho' it be, has not depriv'd me entirely of my Reason; yet willing to be gratified, obliges me to make you this Proposal; and if you accept the Terms, I will be wholly yours. Then thus it is, That if our Embraces should produce a Child or Children, you shall agree, by signing a proper Instrument, to settle on me and them the *Sidbury* Estate; that then you shall have my free Consent to marry another Woman; that I shall live with you, and enjoy alternately with her the common Rights of Marriage; and whenever she dies, that you shall make me your lawful Wife. These are the Conditions which common Prudence suggests, and which if you agree to, will resign me to your Pleasure. Consider and weigh them well, and return me your positive Answer. Leave me now, and I'll endeavour to compose myself to Sleep.

Clodio withdrew and went to his own Bed, it being pretty late at Night. Much

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Inferiary of London

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he ruminated on the Oddness of *Melissa's* Proposal, especially that Article of it relating to the *Sidbury* Estate, which too nearly affected his Interest easily to comply with; yet he consider'd, that if he should absolutely refuse his Consent, the Consequence might be fatal to her Life. Many Expedients he thought of, but could resolve on none, to satisfy his Mistress in a less expensive Way.

Some Days had pass'd, when *Melissa* observing *Clodio's* Silence on the Subject of their last Conference, and doubtful of the Issue, sets her Wits to work in contriving other Means to accomplish her Purpose. The Room she lay in was so contiguous to *Artossa's* Chamber, that it was next to impossible for *Clodio*, in the Night, to come to her's, without disturbing his Grandmother. To prevent this Inconvenience, she propos'd to change her Chamber with a Lady who lay in one at a greater Distance; pretending that the Windows were more open to the Air of the Gardens and the Fields, and therefore wou'd better suit her weakly Constitution than her own. The Lady readily agreed to *Melissa's* Request, and the Change was made.

Clodio

Clodio was soon made acquainted with it, and the next Day she privately put the following Billet into his Hands.

HAVING for the Benefit of my Health, chang'd my Room with Lady —, I desire you when the Family is all in Bed, to come to me, in order to explain your Mind at large, upon the Terms propos'd in our late Conversation. I have no other View in requesting this Favour, but only a Desire of being satisfied in some Things which at present very much perplex me; and therefore I insist that you come dress'd, and with your Breeches on, or you must not expect to be admitted to see, or exchange a Word with Yours, &c.

Melissa.

Clodio was not long in guessing at her Meaning, and laugh'd in his Sleeve, to think how ingenious Women are in finding out Ways and Means to compass any Design which they have once set their Hearts upon. Nor was he a little pleas'd in imagining that he should have less Trouble than he suppos'd he should, in removing those Difficulties which had

hitherto obstructed the Completion of his Wishes. At the Hour of Eleven, then, when universal Silence reign'd throughout the House, wrapping his Gown about him, but without his Breeches, softly he approach'd her Door, which gently tapping with his Finger, she instantly open'd, and as quickly clos'd and lock'd when he was in. *Clodio*, said she, I am sensible how much I expose myself to your Censure, and my Honour to be sacrific'd by licentious Tongues, shou'd this our private Midnight Meeting be known to the ill-natur'd World. But the unsufferable Anxieties which perpetually distract my Soul oblige me to this Act of Rashness, which my better Judgment condemns. This private Meeting therefore I contriv'd, that we may, without Interruption, freely debate the Affair of Love and Honour. Have you consider'd the Terms of my last Proposal? Will you comply with them, or must I still languish under everlasting Doubt? *Clodio*, who knew full well the Consequence of a flat Denial, gave her an Answer full of Tenderness and Love; assur'd her that nothing within the Compass of his Ability, shou'd

should ever be wanting to compleat her Happiness; as to the Terms, which she had propos'd, he agreed to every Article of them, and would perform with the most religious Exactness, of which she shou'd soon be convinc'd by his signing such an Instrument as she required, which he would with all convenient Speed instruct his Lawyer to draw up in proper Terms; and that therefore, since all her Scruples were remov'd, he hop'd she wou'd be her own Enemy no longer, but admit him to her Bed, which was the only Way he knew of to recover her long lost Health. *Melissa* was, or at least seem'd satisfied with the Force of his Reasons, and the Solemnity of his Protestations, which tho' made only the better to impose on her Credulity, she, without raising any more Objections, with too much Facility resign'd herself to his Embraces. That Night he took Possession of her Person, ris'd her Charms, and revell'd in all the Joys of Love.

Love has its bitter Portion as well as sweet; *Melissa* had already drank plentifully of the first, but had, as it were, but a Taste of the last, and yet even this had left such a bitter Relish behind

it, that the Pleasure she had felt, was overballanc'd by the sad Reflections with which her Conscience now was charg'd. Her Folly and her Sin, stript of their false Ornaments, appear in their most ugly Shapes, and terrify her Soul. 'Tis true, Repentance might atone, in some Measure, for her Guilt, but could never repair the Breach which had been made in her Honour. The only Method she could at present think of, as safest to be followed, was, to forbear a Repetition of the Act that thus had wrought such Trouble in her Conscience. Accordingly she desir'd *Clodio* to forbear his Midnight Visits for the present.

She then began to study how to cure the Wound her Virtue had receiv'd; for still she felt it wrangle in her Heart, and Health driven farther off than ever. One only Way she thought of, and instantly resolves to put in Practice. Next Sunday in the Afternoon, when all the Family were at Church, or elsewhere dispers'd, *Clodio* at her Desire bore her Company. She then entreated him, if he had any Regard for her Health or Peace of Mind, that he would ease her of that Load of Guilt and Torment, which

which her late too easy Resignation of herself had brought upon her. 'Tis true, said she, we have plighted to each other our mutual Vows of Love and eternal Fidelity, which, on my Part, shall be most sacredly observ'd: But yet the Law and Canons of the Church, which to be sure demand a due Observance, require a more explicit Performance of the conjugal Solemnity. Indulge then my Frailty, and read over with me, in as solemn a Manner, as tho' we were in the Presence of a numerous Congregation, the Ceremony of Marriage, as we find it in the holy Book of Common Prayer. This only can relieve the Distresses of my Soul, with which my Indiscretion has overwhelm'd it. *Clodio*, at first, a little hesitated; but presently recollecting that the Legality of this ceremonious Act might easily be controverted, none being present, but themselves, to witness that ever such a Thing was done, he agreed to tie the nuptial Knot in the loose Manner she propos'd. Which over, they proceeded to Consummation, the conclusive Rite, that makes a Marriage valid.

Melissa having thus pacified her Conscience

science, *Clodio* had afterwards the free and unrestrain'd Enjoyment of her Person; and by this Means she recover'd her Health and Gaiety of Temper.

Some Time after this, in the Spring of the Year, *Clodio* receiv'd a Letter from a Gentleman in *London*, assuring him, that if he came to Town, he would put it in his Power to marry a Lady with a Fortune of 10000, *l.* *Clodio* was pleas'd with the Proposal; but had so much Regard to his Engagements with *Melissa*, that he thought it was very proper to acquaint her with the Offer that was made, and to have her Opinion upon it. Accordingly he shew'd her the Letter; but perceiving that she was not able to support the Thoughts of it, to quiet her Mind, which he perceived was prodigiously ruffled, and to prevent the bad Consequences which his complying with this Offer might produce, he assur'd her that he would not accept it. And that she might be perfectly satisfied of his Sincerity, he advis'd her to go to *London*, under Pretence of visiting her Brother whom she had not seen since her Father's Death; and in a Fortnight after he would follow. For should he absolutely
refuse

refuse to see the Lady, and pay no Re-
 gard to the Proposal of his Friend, he
 should very much disoblige his Grand-
 mother, who was acquainted with the
 Affair, and so hurt his own Interest.
Melissa was satisfied with these Reasons,
 and content to act under his Directions.
 Accordingly she set out for *London*,
 where *Clodio* also arriv'd about the Time
 agreed upon, and soon afterwards waited
 on his Friend, who told him that he was
 misinform'd with regard to the Lady's
 Fortune, which was not quite so large as
 had been reported; however he advis'd
 him to go and see her. *Clodio*, upon
 hearing his Friend say this, put himself
 into a great Passion, and said he had
 us'd him very ill, in engaging him to
 undertake so long a Journey for so little
 Purpose, and that he would neither see
 the Lady, nor have any Thing to do
 with her. However, after a great deal
 of Persuasion, he was prevail'd upon to
 pay her a Visit. He found her, upon
 Trial, a Person of excellent Sense, ready
 Wit, virtuous, handsome, and good-
 natur'd; and indeed her Person was un-
 exceptionable, had her Fortune been so
 too; and in Truth this was the only

L Handle

Handle *Clodio* could lay hold of to excuse his farther Addresses to the Lady. In the mean while he took Care to inform *Melissa* with every Step he took; and she was exceedingly pleas'd with his Conduct, being firmly perswaded she should now secure him entirely to herself.

Their Business being done at *London*, they return'd together to *Pinkney*; where they enjoy'd their amorous Dalliances without Controul. One Night as they were in Bed together, fast lock'd in each other's Arms, *Clodio*, said she, I fear I am with Child, the Thoughts of which have frighted me almost to Death. What shall I do, or how provide against so dreadful an Event? May I destroy the Fruit just planted in the Womb, before it ripens to Maturity, and Life and Soul invigorate the little Mass? Or shall I not offend against the Almighty Hand who gives it Form, and shapes it to a Man, if I prevent the Workmanship, and crush the Embrio ere it takes in Life and Sense? Resolve these Doubts, these sad Perplexities of Mind, that work me to Distraction. *Clodio*, not caring to give a direct Answer, or to enter into a true State

State of the Question, entertain'd her with a long unintelligible Discourse to the Effect following: That if ever the Opinion of Mankind were unanimous in any Thing, it was in this, that Man and Woman were entirely at their own Liberty whether they would propagate their Species or not, tho' *Moses* differs from this Sentiment, when he commands the *Israelites*, as from God, that they should increase and multiply, and to encourage them, allow'd of Polygamy and Divorces whenever the Man pleas'd; that however the Christian System disallow'd of both, and *St. Paul* preached a Doctrine which had occasion'd Multitudes of both Sexes to be lock'd up, and render'd incapable of propagating; that the antient *Greeks* and *Romans*, and at present the *Chinese*, tho' by their Laws they encourage Propagation, yet they give Parents free Liberty to dispose of their Children in what Manner they pleas'd; that in *China* it was no more infamous for a poor Man to expose his Child and leave it to perish in the Street or upon the Highway, than for a poor Man in *England* to get drunk and beat his Wife; that he had heard it was

a common Practice among the India Women to make themselves miscarry; that however the Christian Law, tho' it in a great Measure hinder'd the Propagation, yet positively forbid the Destruction of our Kind; and in *France* the Law punish'd those Women with as much Severity who cause themselves to miscarry, as if they had committed actual Murder, tho' it was not so in *England*.

This and a great deal more to the same Purpose *Clodio* preach'd to her, which she understood just as much as if he had read to her one of *Virgil's Latin Eclogues*. She told him, however, that tho' she could make neither Head nor Tail of what he had said, yet she knew thus much, that it was a Woman's Duty to obey her Husband; that she would be govern'd entirely by his Directions, which she would punctually observe any Time before the Child was quick; that being on the Morrow to accompany her Brother to the *Bath*, he should come to her there at a certain Time, before which she should be at a Certainty. *Clodio* went to the *Bath* at the Day appointed, when she informed him, that she was not with Child; he said he was glad of it,

it, took his Leave, and went home.

Some little Time afterwards, *Melissa* left the *Bath*, and came back to *Pinkney*. *Clodio*, who was always upon the Listen after Heiresses and young Ladies of large Fortunes, happen'd to hear of one who liv'd at *Bibury*. This Lady, whom we shall call *Leonora*, was Heiress, upon the Death of her Mother who is still living, to an Estate in Lands, Money, Annuities, &c. to the Amount of thirty thousand Pounds; a Temptation sufficient to induce *Clodio* to make his Addresses to her. But unfortunately having no Manner of Acquaintance either with *Leonora* or her Mother *Sophia*, he was some Time in debating with himself in what Manner to proceed.

But before he took one Step in the Affair, he thought it was proper to acquaint *Melissa* with his Design. He did so, and desir'd her Assistance in bringing the Matter to bear. *Melissa* cou'd not but be vex'd to think she must be made the Instrument of destroying her own Happiness; but finding there was no way to avoid it, but by quarrelling with *Clodio*, (which she had very good Reasons to be cautious of) she only lamented

mented the Narrowness of her Fortune, which had depriv'd her of the Liberty of living according to her own Mind; that however he might dispose of himself, she was determin'd never to give her Hand in Marriage to any Man living besides; then put him in Mind of his former Promises, and submitted herself entirely to his Disposal: For she was resolv'd never to put herself into those Agonies, which had always prov'd fatal to her Health. *Clodio* again promis'd her that she should share in all his Fortunes and that since she had so readily acquiesc'd with his marrying another Lady, he would increase her Income of one hundred Pounds a Year, which was paid her by her Brother for the Interest of her Fortune in his Hands, by settling one hundred Pounds a Year more upon her during her Life, if she would contribute to bring about the Match propos'd. His Scheme was this, that they both should wait on Mrs. S——, who, he knew was intimate with *Sophia*, the Mother of *Leonora*, the young Lady he had in his Eye. Accordingly they paid a Visit to Mrs. S——, and *Melissa* open'd the Affair, first in private between themselves,

selves, and then more at large in Presence of *Clodio*, who added his own Request for the Favour of her Intercession. Mrs. S—— considering it was a pretty equal Match, assur'd him that she would use her Interest with the Lady; which she did, but met with a flat Denial.

This Affair, however, was not manag'd so privately but in a short Time it became the common Subject of Conversation. About a Year afterwards a Farmer, a Neighbour of *Clodio's*, came to him and told him, that he had heard of the Offer he had made of his Service, to *Leonora*, and of her Refusal to accept it; but that if he would be rul'd by him, he should certainly obtain her. *Clodio* ask'd him, which Way? He answer'd, that if he would apply to Mr. *Lex* the Attorney, he would put him in a Method by which he would infallibly gain his Point. *Clodio*, upon this, took the Farmer with him, and rode over to Mr. *Lex*, who liv'd but a few Miles off. *Clodio* having open'd to him the Nature of the Business he came upon, Mr. *Lex* gave him the most positive Assurances, that if he would put himself

himself entirely under his Direction, he would pawn his Life for it, that he would put him in Possession of the Lady *Leonora*. In order to which, the first Step to be taken was, that he must write two Letters, one for the Mother, and the other for the Daughter, which he must send by his Servant, together with a Present of a Haunch of Venison.

It is not necessary to repeat the Particulars of *Clodio's* Courtship. Let it suffice to say in general, that *Sophia* returned an Answer to his Letter with Permission to pay her and her Daughter a Visit at *Sidbury*, where they lived; that accordingly he went, carried with him an Inventory of his Estate, and gave it to *Sophia*; had some Conversation with *Leonora*; found her very reserved; did not much like her Person, but for other more weighty Considerations was induced to proceed in his Courtship; obtain'd her's and her Mother's Consent; the Marriage Articles were drawn and signed; and, lastly, the nuptial Ceremony performed, made them Man and Wife. After Marriage he divided his Time betwixt *Bibury* and *Pinkney*, that is, between the first and second Wife

Wife, who had both a pretty equal Share of his Favours.

He had not been married many Months to his second Wife, before he discovered her Temper to be very different from what he at first apprehended. He found her proud and ill-natured, and perpetually finding Occasions to quarrel with him; ever scolding at him for Trifles of no Consequence, and never giving him a peaceable Minute whenever he was in her Company. But whether her Incivility to him proceeded from the natural Crossness of her Temper, from Provocations which his morose and surly Humours might give her, or from some private Hints she might have had, of the Intimacy between *Melissa* and him, is not certainly known. In this manner they lived together for about two Years, in which Time *Leonora* had two Children by him.

Clodio had now Leisure enough to reflect on the Disparity in the Tempers of the two Women he was engaged with. *Melissa* was passive under all the Affronts and ill Treatment which she had suffered from him; *Leonora*, far from enduring all Usage, began it first; and from a bare Suspicion that he either had or designed

to wrong her, tortured him with all the Plagues in the Power of a female Tongue. Thus was he justly punished for the ungrateful Returns which he had all along made to *Melissa's* unshaken Fidelity and Tenderness.

In the mean while *Melissa* perceived that she had involved herself in almost inextricable Difficulties. She saw how impossible it was for *Clodio* to be true to her and just to *Leonora*; that he had not yet performed his Promise of settling upon her the *Sidbury* Estate; nor had done any Thing for the Security of her future Subsistence in Case of Accidents; but if ever their private Amour should take Wind, her Reputation would be irreparably lost; that the Children which he had by *Leonora* would infallibly cut off all Hopes and Expectations which she had conceived of any great Benefit from him even in Case of *Leonora's* Death, who was as likely to live as herself; and in fine, reflecting on the Conduct of *Clodio*, and his Behaviour to her from the Beginning of their Intimacy to that Time, saw that she had only been his Dupe, and that all his Vows and Protestations of Regard for her, were made

made meerly to quiet the Violence of her Passion, and to prevail upon her to resign herself to his Pleasure. Having pondered these Things in her Mind, she began to consider in what Manner she should disengage herself from the Embarrassments which her unhappy Fondness for him had brought her into. A thousand Times did she repent of her refusing the Addresses of *Aminator*, and wished from her Soul that the same Opportunity would offer again. But suppose it should, how can I (thought she again) pass those Vows to another, which I have already so plighted to *Clodio*? Am I not his Wife before God, by the most sacred Ties which it is possible for Religion to bind me in? 'Tis true, no Witness can testify the Solemnization of the nuptial Act; but the Testimony of Conscience is stronger than the Evidence of a thousand Witnesses, at least to an honest Mind; neither can I think myself other than *Clodio's* lawful and espoused Wife, tho' even he should refuse to own me such. But then has he not cancelled all the Obligations of our Marriage, by entering into the same with another Lady? 'Tis certain that the Laws of *England*

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(92)

do not allow a Man to have two Wives. Suppose I should contest my Right, as of prior Obligation, how shall I prove it? That is impossible, if he forswears it, which he may do with as little Ceremony as he has broke thro' those solemn Vows and Oaths which he has so often made of his inviolable Regard to my Honour and Welfare. Why then should I flatter myself with Hopes that have so sandy a Foundation? I perceive that for a long Time I have been building Castles in the Air, and scheming out Scenes of Happiness which have no Existence but in my own sickly Brain. Curs'd be the Remembrance of my Frailty that first admitted Love into my weak and foolish Heart! I have hugg'd a Serpent in my Bosom that will sting me to Death. Why was I born with all the Softness of my Sex, yet made to bear Calamities above a Woman's Strength? Where is the Friend with whom I might advise? To whom can I disclose the secret Sorrows of my Soul? No, no! So strange, so monstrous strange is my unprecedented Case, that it exceeds the Power of the most eloquent Orator and the most penetrating Wit, to find out Words or Means

*This is to all whom it may
concern (93)*

to solve my Doubts, and set my Soul at Ease.

Thus poor *Melissa*, wandering from Thought to Thought, was lost in the mazy Labirinth, nor could she see one Glimpse of Light that might direct her to the Path of Truth and Certainty. In this Distress, sometimes she had a Mind to advise with *Clodio*; but he was so entirely governed by interested Views, and had so often deceived her on other Occasions, that she could place no Confidence in his Counsels; she was likewise pretty well assured that his Advice would be the same as lately he had given her, that is, to marry some other Person, which her Conscience forbid her to do, so long as she apprehended herself bound under a matrimonial Vow to him. However she thought it her best Way to keep upon good Terms with him, till she should be in a better Capacity of providing for herself. Accordingly she tells him, that observing his Wife's unhappy Temper, which would not suffer any Body about her to live with any Degree of Pleasure, she had some Thoughts of going again to *Sidbury*, where she could spend her Time in much more Felicity than

than she did there. *Clodio* approv'd the Motion, and added, that he would take every Opportunity of being with her. To *Sidbury* therefore she went, and was heartily welcom'd by *Artossa*, who was always pleas'd with her Company.

Amintor had long since heard of *Clodio's* Marriage with *Leonora*; at which he was the more surpriz'd from his Apprehension that he was under conjugal Engagements to *Melissa*, which he imagined was the Reason of the cold Reception which his Addresses formerly met with from her, as hath been before hinted. But that Obstacle being now remov'd, as he suppos'd, his Love for *Melissa* reviv'd, and he resolves to renew his Courtship. As soon therefore as he heard she was come to *Sidbury*, he went to visit her, and invited her over to *Caton* to see his Sisters, with whom she had been formerly very intimate. In Consequence of which a good Correspondence was establish'd between the two Families.

Amintor was not ignorant of the Intimacy that had long subsisted between *Clodio* and *Melissa*, but was not perfectly inform'd of the particular Engagements

agements they were under to each other, and therefore thought it prudent to be satisfied in that Point, before he renew'd his Addresses in Form; and as he thought Nobody could give him the Satisfaction he wanted better than herself, he resolves, if possible, to have it from her own Mouth.

Not long after this, *Melissa* fell ill of the Measles, and *Amintor* went to see her; and perceiving she was on the Recovery, told her he was exceedingly glad to see her in so fair a Way of regaining her Health; since he hop'd he should thereby have an Opportunity, which he had long desir'd, of compleating his Happiness with her on the most honourable Terms. *Melissa* fetching a profound Sigh, made him an Answer to this Effect: *Amintor*, said she, I am extremely oblig'd to you for your kind Regards for me, which neither Time, nor Absence, nor the uncivil Returns which I made to your former generous Offers, have in the least abated. I wish I had accepted them! But, alas! why do I wish Impossibilities? I neither then could, nor ever now can, make you a suitable Return for this undeserv'd Goodness

ness, so long as that Villain *Clodio* lives; he has abus'd me monstrously; Shame and Confusion oblige me to conceal the Particulars, which I am afraid will be known soon enough to my Sorrow. Look upon me as the most unhappy of my Sex, and leave me to the Malice of my Fortune, least too near an Approach should draw you into the Eddy of my Miseries.

Aminor, imagining that the Injury she complain'd of, was, that common one, the Loss of her Honour, too easily resign'd on solemn Promises of Marriage afterwards, made her this Answer. *Melissa*, the Wiles and Stratagems of Men are infinite when they intend to sap a Woman's Virtue. They vary themselves in every Shape that may best disguise their real Intentions; and always make their Attacks on that Side where they are sure to find the least Opposition. When Nature and Importunity combine together, the most rigid Virtue will find enough to do to keep the Post of Honour safe; and therefore I am never surpriz'd when I hear of a Conquest of this Sort made by a cunning artful Man. If therefore *Clodio* has, by Subtilty and Artifice,

Artifice, prevail'd upon your good Nature to grant him Favours inconsistent with the strict Rules of Honour, consider it as a Frailty which the severest of your Sex have been guilty of. I say not this to palliate the Offence of the Criminal who has done you this Injury, but to stir your Resentment against a Man who has so basely robb'd you of that invaluable Jewel, your Honour, for which nothing in his Power now, can make you an adequate Recompence. However you are not quite destitute of Means of procuring some, tho' not an equivalent Satisfaction. You have not, I imagine, yet entirely broke with him, and it's my Advice, that you do not; but on the contrary, keep up and cultivate a good Correspondence between you. Write to him in the warmest Terms that the sincerest Love can inspire, or your Wit can dictate; and by the Answers which you will receive, I don't in the least doubt but you will be furnish'd with Means to satiate your Revenge for the irreparable Wrongs he has done you. *Melissa* thank'd him for his Advice, and assur'd him she would punctually follow it.

N

About two Months after this, *Clodio* came to *Sidbury*, where he was soon inform'd of *Amintor's* Courtship, and of the great Intimacy between *Melissa* and his Family. *Clodio*, apprehending he was on the Point of losing his Mistress, storm'd and ray'd at a violent Rate; charg'd her with Ingratitude, and said all the spiteful Things that his Rage could dictate; swore Revenge against the base Invader of his Property, and that he would demand Satisfaction of him the first Time he met him; and order'd *Melissa* to go and forbid *Amintor* to proceed in his Courtship, for that she was resolv'd not to marry him. Meeting afterwards with *Amintor*, he quarell'd with him, telling him, that as to *Melissa*, whom he was inform'd he courted for his Wife, she had long been his Mistress, and had lain with her above an hundred Times. This Declaration, so much to the Dishonour of *Melissa*, stung *Amintor* to the quick, and made him swear that he should make good his Words, or defend his villainous Aspersions with the Point of his Sword.

This said, they parted, and *Clodio* return'd to *Sidbury*. By this he imagin'd
he

he had done enough to prejudice *Amintor* against *Melissa*, and by this Means should break off the intended Match between them. However, fearing least his own clandestine Villanies should, some how or other, come to Light, he thought it his best Way to make his Peace with *Melissa*, and so prevent her from publishing the Wrongs and Injuries she had suffer'd from him, the Knowledge of which must redound to his eternal Infamy. As soon therefore as he got home, he finds her out, and accosts her after this Manner. *Melissa*, said he, I have had so many unquestionable Proofs of your Love and Constancy, that I am not a little surpriz'd you should give any Encouragement to the Addresses of my sworn Enemy, the Scoundrel *Amintor*. But I know you will retort upon me the Impossibility of ever being my lawful Wife so long as *Leonora* lives. But pray recollect the Solemnity of our private Marriage, which, in my Judgment, should bind our Consciences as much as if the Ceremony had been perform'd in the most publick Manner; and that you may be convinc'd that I speak the real sentiments of my Heart, I will, in a

Month's Time, in the most publick Manner you shall desire, own you for my lawful Wife, and send *Leonora* with her two Brats home to her Mother *Sophia*. This I hope will make some Amends for the Injuries which, otherwise, you may justly complain you have suffer'd from me.

The Improbability that *Clodio* could if he would, or would if he could, act agreeable to what he had now declar'd, was an Argument with *Melissa* to believe, that he only said this to bring her off from the Engagements which he suppos'd she either had or might enter into to marry *Amintor*. However she did not at that Time think it adviseable to tell him what were her real Sentiments in that Respect; and therefore answer'd him to this Purpose, That as it would be irksome to repeat the Obligations they were mutually under to each other, she should only say, that if he would punctually perform what he now so faithfully promis'd, within the Time limited, he, and no other Man, should be her Husband; but if he fail'd of his Word should, in that Case, think he had Liberty to dispose of herself in

Manner as might best secure her future Happiness. *Clodio* again protested that he meant to do as he had said; and in the mean Time order'd her to pay a Visit to *Amintor*, to desire him to desist from his farther Solicitations, because she was pre-engag'd to another.

Clodio by this Stroke of Policy, judg'd he should be able to overfet all the Schemes that had been laid to deprive him of *Melissa*. For having already prepossess'd *Amintor* with Notions so injurious to her Honour, who he suppos'd would at first Sight quarrel with her, and it not being in her Power to refute the Accusations he had charg'd her with, it must necessarily follow, that he would cast her off with Scorn and Contempt. This he surmiz'd, tho' the Consequence which soon follow'd, convinc'd him that he was quite wrong in his Calculations.

Melissa, ignorant of what had pass'd between *Clodio* and *Amintor*, went over to *Coton*, under a Pretence of a Visit to *Amintor*'s Sisters. It was not long before *Amintor*, in a private Conversation, told her, that he was now perfectly appriz'd of the Reasons of her late Declaration,

ration, that it was not in her Power to marry him while *Clodio* liv'd; for that he himself had affirm'd to him, that he had receiv'd all the Favours in her Power to bestow; that she had been for many Years his Mistress, and so should continue during his Pleasure, and desired him to seduce her from him. I know, added he, that he is a Villain, and will say and do any Thing to compass his Ends, tho' ever so much to the Prejudice of Innocence and Virtue, Things which as he is conscious of the Want of himself, hates to see possess'd by any Body else. I entreat you therefore, that you will tell me sincerely every Thing that has pass'd betwixt him and you; what has been his Treatment of you; what Engagements you are under to him, or he to you; and what Reason you have for the Resentment you have express'd for his Usage of you.

Melissa was so astonish'd at the unparalleled Villainy of *Clodio*, that it was some Minutes before she could recollect her Thoughts enough to return *Amintor* an Answer. At last, having recover'd her Spirits a little, she broke out into such kind of Exclamations as these.

Good

Good God! how is it that thy Thunder sleeps while such a perjur'd Villain lives to brave thy Vengeance? Is Innocence no longer under thy Protection? Must Virtue always be made a Sacrifice to the vitiated Passions of Men? Have Oaths, Vows and Imprecations, for which even the Heathens profess'd the most sacred Regard, lost their Force among us who profess a purer Religion? Surely, if *Clodio* is not the most licentious Atheist living, or does not believe he shall ever render an Account to a superior Judge for the Violation of the most sacred Obligations it is possible for Mankind to enter into, he must be persuaded that Divine Justice will, one Time or other, severely punish him for his enormous Crimes. But why do I talk of his Principles, since all the World knows that he is influenc'd by none but his Avarice? It was that induc'd him to marry *Leonora* and abandon me; and if a like Occasion offer'd, he would discard her with as much Facility as he does me. What the particular Engagements we are under to each other be, I am not now at Liberty to inform you. But if he does not within the Space of a Month, the
Time

Time by himself limited, make me public Satisfaction for the Wrongs he has done me; I will then disclose to you such Scenes of Villainy, as I believe you yourself will allow have not a Precedent in History. Let this apologize for my Unwillingness to discover the Secret you seem so earnest to be inform'd of, and be assur'd, that if he does not perform his Promise, you shall then know the Grounds of all my Complaints against him.

Amintor was satisfied with her Answer, and determin'd to enquire no farther till the Expiration of the Term appointed. *Melissa* return'd to *Sidbury*, yet made frequent Visits to *Coton* to see *Amintor*'s Sisters. In one of those Visits she appearing under a great Concern and Anxiety of Mind, *Amintor* ask'd her the Reason of her Uneasiness.

She told him, that *Clodio* had resolv'd to quarrel him, where and whenever he met him; that she dreaded the Consequence, and therefore entreated him to forbear saying any Thing that might provoke him to violent Measures in case Accident or Occasion should bring them together. *Amintor* calm'd her Uneasiness

ness by assuring her, that for her Sake, he should be careful to avoid coming to Extremities, unless directly oblig'd to it by his Insolence or unsufferable Behaviour. *Clodio*, on the other Hand took all Opportunities, and in all Companies, to villify and asperse *Amintor* with the most opprobrious Language that Malice could suggest, or his Tongue could utter. But his Virulence was never more apparent than when he was in Company of *Amintor's* Friends, but particularly with *Melissa's* Brothers, whom he knew to be staunch Whigs, and intimate with *Amintor*. To them therefore he stigmatizes him with the odious Name of a *Jacobite*, and, consequently, that he was an Enemy to his Country, and as his Principles were diametrically opposite to the present Establishment, he might be a dangerous Man, whose Company should be avoided, especially in those troublesome Times, it being in the Height of the late Rebellion. *Amintor* took no Pains to refute these Calumnies, since he could appeal to his Actions as the best Evidence of his Loyalty; neither did such groundless Slanders gain any Credit with those they were spoken to.

The Month was at length expir'd in which *Clodia* promis'd to do *Melissa* Justice, by publickly owning her for his Wife. However, he fail'd in the Performance, which set her entirely at Liberty to take such Measures as she judg'd most conducive to her Felicity, and freed her from those Obligations which, hitherto, had bound her in a blind Obedience to him. For, since he had broke all the Covenants and Terms that he had ever made, neither Law nor Equity could oblige her to perform those on her Part, since her Duty to *Clodio* was only conditional, and on a Supposition that he would be punctual in the Execution of the Part he had undertaken. Without more ado therefore, she goes to *Aminor*, and tells him the whole Secret of her Amour with *Clodio*, and every Passage, as far as Decency wou'd permit, from the Beginning of it to that Instant, but particularly their Marriage, as before related; how he had prevail'd upon her to consent to his second Marriage; his Promises of settling her in the *Sidbury* Estate, and allowing her an Annuity of 100 *l.* a Year so long as his Wife *Leonora* should live; and lastly, his

his swearing to acknowledge her publicly for his Wife, and sending *Leonora* home to her Mother in a Month, during which, I desired you to excuse my declaring my Grievances; but that Time being now expired without the least Sign of his Compliance, I can't conceive that I am any longer bound to conceal his iniquitous Proceedings; and tho' possibly, you may hate me for my too easy Resignation of myself to his Pleasure, yet I am sure you must condemn his unjust and cruel Usage of me. If Love was my Folly, it was likewise my Fate; too powerfully I felt its Influence to make any effectual Resistance, and too easily submitted my Neck to the silken Cord in which for some Years he has led me a Slave, and tied me up to all his Brutish Humours. At last I'm cured; my Eyes are open, and I detest both myself and him. O! could I be free'd from the Guilt of that sacred Vow, which Heaven was Witness to, when I plighted him my Troth, and promis'd I would be his faithful Wife, with Pleasure I would give him up his broken Vows, forgive his infinite Barbarities, and willingly secrete me from his Eyes for ever. But

that's impossible! and Sorrow and Wretchedness must be my constant Portion while this miserable Life shall last.

Amintor was exceedingly moved at her Relation; pitied her deplorable Case, and stood amaz'd at the prodigious Wick- edness of *Clodio*. Is it possible, said he, that human Nature can be capable of such Baseness! Such Inhumanity! Such a continued Series of Barbarity! Could not the Ruin of one weak Woman content him! Were not the Spoils of her Virtue enough to triumph in; but he must destroy the Peace and Happiness of another Innocent of that defenceless Sex, and bring Desolation into whole Families! How must it shock the guiltless *Leonora* when she shall be told how monstrously she has been deceiv'd! No more to call herself a Wife! Her Children illegitimate! How will it distract the good *Sophia*, when she shall hear of this gross Imposition on herself! Her Daughter so egregiously abus'd by a Man on whom she had conferr'd such signal Favours! As to you, *Melissa*, what shall I say or how advise? I sincerely lament your unfortunate Condition, but know no Remedy to help you; yet this I pro-
mise,

mise, that if you will second my Assistance, I'll try what in my Power lies to make him do you Justice; and if the Law will give you any Relief, or punish him for his nefarious Actions, no Pains or Expence shall be wanting to bring him to a due Sense of his Crimes. In order to which it will be necessary to follow the Advice that I have before given you; that is, to keep up a fair Correspondence with him, to express as much Love for him as ever, and when he goes to *Pinkney*, to write to him with all the Ardour of the strongest Affection; and by his Answers you will be furnish'd with Evidence enough to convict him of those Crimes, which, otherwise it would be difficult to prove against him. In the mean Time be assur'd, that your unfortunate Situation (which, in some Measure, has been owing to your too great Confidence in the Honour of a Man who had given you abundant Proof that he had none) is so far from lessening my Esteem and Value for you, that it will set an Edge on my Diligence and Assiduity to revenge your Wrongs, and to bring him to publick Shame who has been the Author of your Misfortunes.

tunes. I have undertaken your Cause, and will spend the last Penny of my Estate, ere he shall triumph in his Wick- edness. As you have put yourself under my Protection, depend upon me as a most faithful Guardian to defend you from the open or conceal'd Attacks of every base Invader of your Honour or your Peace.

Melissa thank'd him for his generous Offer, confess'd herself too poor in every Thing but Gratitude, to make him suit- able Amends for such disinterested Fa- vour; yet confess'd she should be infi- nitely indebted to his Goodness, if by any Means he could do her Right, and sensibly convince *Clodio*, that he was not out of the Reach of the Law, tho' he seem'd to set both Conscience and Humanity at Defiance.

Soon afterwards *Melissa* return'd to *Sidbury*, and *Clodio* was very inquisitive to know what had pass'd betwixt *Amin- tor* and her. She told him, in general, that she believ'd *Aminutor* was one of those Libertines of the Age whose Love was easily transferr'd from one agreeable Object to another; that tho' formerly he had express'd a great Warmth of Passion for

for her, yet now he shewed much more Coldness and Indifference, owing, she suppos'd, to some new Charmer that had taken Possession of his Heart: But prudently conceal'd what had been the principal Subject of the Discourse between *Amintor* and her. *Clodio* seem'd satisfied with what she told him, and believ'd that he had now put an effectual Stop to *Amintor's* Designs upon his Mistress; and therefore only gave her some Cautions with respect to her future Behaviour, assur'd her he would yet make good his Promises to her as soon as a convenient Opportunity should happen; and the next Day took his Leave, and went to *Pinkney*.

Amintor now consider'd what Course he had best to take, as well to expose *Clodio*, as to do Justice to the injur'd *Melissa*. In order to which he informs her Brothers of the iniquitous Dealings of this her false-hearted Lover; upon hearing whereof they were greatly amaz'd and afflicted, and readily join'd with him in a Resolution to bring him to condign Punishment. The next Step he resolv'd to take was, to acquaint *Sophia* with the villainous Intention of her Son-in law

in-law upon herself and her Daughter. But previous to this, he judg'd it very proper to wait his Return to *Sidbury*, and try if he could bring him to an amicable Agreement, and prevail upon him by fair Means to quit his Pretensions to *Melissa*, and give her an absolute Release from all the Obligations and Engagements she might be under to him. For this Purpose, when *Clodio* came again to *Sidbury*, which was about two Months afterwards, *Aminor* persuaded her Brothers to go and discourse the Matter with him, and see if they could bring him to any reasonable Terms; and in case he continued obstinately deaf to all their Reasons and Arguments, to lay before him the fatal Consequences of his Refusal, since *Leonora's* Mother would certainly be inform'd of all his Transactions with *Melissa*. They waited on *Clodio* accordingly, upbraided him with his monstrous Usage of their Sister; and urged that, since he had married another Woman, and thereby render'd himself incapable of doing Justice to *Melissa* as a Wife, it would be but just and reasonable in him to discharge her from all such Contracts and Agreements as had been

been made or might then subsist between them. *Clodio* told them that he knew of no such Contracts as they talk'd of, and therefore he saw no Occasion for such a Discharge as they mention'd; and that as to *Melissa* she was entirely at Liberty to dispose of herself in what Manner she pleas'd. However, said he, to prevent the Trouble and Uneasiness, which the Knowledge of my Intimacy with her may occasion to my Wife and her Mother *Sophia*, I am content to make a Settlement on *Melissa* during her Life; and if nothing less than the *Sidbury* Estate will content her, it's possible I may be induc'd to give her that, provided she agrees not to marry with *Amintor* my sworn Enemy.

These being all the Concessions he was willing to grant, they left him and return'd to *Amintor*, to whom they gave an Account of their Conference. He easily perceiv'd, by *Clodio's* Answer, that he was very solicitous to keep the Affair from the Knowledge of *Sophia*, and as willing to have *Melissa* in the same State of Bondage and Dependency as formerly. He therefore signified to him by a Letter, that unless he would give

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her such a Release as was requir'd, and likewise make such a Settlement upon her as was demanded, and which he had often promis'd, such Measures would be taken as the Law shall direct, and he must expect to be expos'd to all the Infamy his Actions had deserv'd, and that he would acquaint *Sophia* with his Treachery to her Daughter.

Clodio taking no Notice of these repeated Remonitrances, *Amintor* resolves to open the Affair to *Sophia*; which he did in the following Letter.

Madam,

UNwilling as I am to create Uneasiness in a Family, and ungrateful as it is to a generous Mind to disturb the Peace of Persons for whom I have the highest Esteem, by telling them disagreeable Truths, yet, as I reckon it my Duty to disabuse my Friends when I see them grossly impos'd upon, I must inform you, be the Consequence what it will, of a Piece of most atrocious Wickedness and Treachery that has been practis'd upon you and your Daughter *Leonora*. *Clodio*, to whom
you

you gave her in Marriage, and with
 her a very handsome Dowry, is a most
 egregious Villain. For those Vows,
 which in the Face of a Congregation,
 and in the Sight of Heaven, he plight-
 ed to her, did, at the same Time, most
 properly belong to another, to whom
 he had before given them in a sacred
 and solemn, tho' not quite in so pub-
 lick a Manner. In short, he had, some
 Years before, been privately married
 to his Cousin *Melissa*, to whom he
 gave all the Rites and Privileges of a
 Wife, and with whom your Daughter
 has shar'd them ever since. All this is
 Truth, which I am able to prove by
 incontestable Evidence. If you doubt
 my Veracity, question him upon it
 yourself, shew him this Letter, and
 tell him too, that I am now preparing
 Things to bring him to a severe Ac-
 count before such Judges as will not be
 bias'd by Money or Favour; which
 will lay open such Scenes of Villainy,
 as will astonish the World with Horror
 and Amazement. And it's necessary,
 as well for the Benefit of Mankind, as
 in Justice to those he has injur'd, to
 make an Example of such a Villain,

' that others may be deterr'd from such
 ' hellish Practices as he has been guilty
 ' of. This I am firmly resolv'd to do,
 ' and doubt, not when you are satisfied
 ' in the Truth of the Premises (as but
 ' too soon you will be) you will concur
 ' with me in such Measures as shall be
 ' judg'd requisite for that Purpose.

I am, Madam,
 with the most profound Respect,
 Your Ladyship's most obedient,
 humble Servant,

AMINTOR.

Who can conceive the Agony and
 Astonishment of *Sophia* which the Read-
 ing of this Letter threw her into! Some-
 times she condemn'd herself for giving
 more Attention to the Fortune and
 Estate of the Man, than to his private
 Life and Character, which she too easily
 pass'd over as of small Concernment to
 the Happiness of her Child; whereas in
 Reality they ought to have been the
 most regarded. Then would she break
 out into Execrations against the Villain
 who had so notoriously abus'd her Con-
 fidence

fidence and too easy Credulity! What
 had I, said she, or any of my Family,
 done to this Man, that he should study
 such a horrid Piece of Revenge, and
 bring such a Calamity upon us! I did
 not seek his Alliance; nay, I once po-
 sitively refus'd to admit his Addresses to
 my Daughter; yet he still persecuted
 me with his Solicitations till he had ob-
 tain'd his Ends. Reason enough had she
 to complain of his surly Behaviour and
 cruel Usage, and too rashly I censur'd
 her for her Murmurings at the Unhap-
 piness of her Destiny that join'd her to
 a Man of his morose and inhuman Dis-
 position. How shall I be able to tell her
 that she has no Husband, after she has
 been some Years married to a Man, and
 a Man too of my own chusing? How
 will she be shock'd to hear that her Chil-
 dren are Bastards, tho' born in Wedlock!
 How hard, how miserable must be the
 Case of that Woman, whose Condition
 is so peculiarly wretched, that it is not
 in the Power of the Law itself to relieve
 her! Unhappy *Leonora*! Unhappy me
 thy Mother! who in studying the best
 Means of promoting thy Felicity and
 Grandeur, have unwittingly involv'd
 thee

thee and thy helpless Offspring in the most dreadful Calamities that Heav'n can inflict. Want, Poverty, Disappointments, Diseases, and even Death itself, are Things incident to our Nature, and to which all Mankind, not excepting even the Rich and Great, are liable while we continue in this transitory and fluctuating Situation in which Providence has plac'd us here: And yet so short is our Foresight, or rather so strong are our Passions for Grandeur and the glittering Vanities of the World, that in cutting out our Road to Happiness, we wretchedly mistake the Way, and by following an *Ignis fatuus*, a false Light which Ambition holds out to us, we fall unawares into an irretrievable Gulph of Misery. But why do I torment myself with these sad and melancholy Reflections, which far from bringing me Relief, do but add Weight to the Burden which I already feel is too heavy for me to support! This wretched Comfort only have I left, to part my Daughter from the Villain's Bed who has thus dishonoured her, and violated all those sacred Ties which Heaven ordain'd to guard the Virtuous and Good. Her and her harmless Babes I'll shelter
from

from the future Injuries of Man. With me, at least, they shall enjoy the Peace and Calm of Life; and when grim Death, with unrelenting Hand, shall snatch me from them, I'll leave them Means sufficient to bear them up against the Frowns of an ill-natur'd World.

While she was thus revolving in her Mind, and bewailing with herself, the dreadful Evils which her own Imprudence, and the Villainy of *Clodio* had brought upon her and her Daughter, he himself came to pay her a Visit. The Sight of him rais'd new Commotions in her Soul, and stirr'd up all the Woman in her. *Clodio*, said she with Fury in her Looks, and Anger darting from her Eyes, the dismal Prelude to a stormy Greeting — *Clodio*, said she, what foul malicious Fiend inspir'd you with the base Design of ruining a Woman? One who has heap'd Favours on you with a liberal Hand? Who has denied you nothing you could ever ask, but exceeded even your largest Wishes? Why am I made the Butt to dart your Malice at? Could you not find some fitter Stale or Stalking-horse to your Ambition? Some base and sordid Wretch, some easy quiet Fool,
some

some slavish Ass, that for a little Provender, would bear the heaviest Burdens you could lay upon her? You're much mistaken if you think me such. Know, I am a Woman, and have a Spirit to resent Affronts, tho' offer'd by the haughtiest of your Sex; and you shall find I am not destitute of Means sufficient to revenge my Wrongs. Had I been a Man, you dar'd not to have us'd me thus; soon you'd have felt the Weight of my Resentment from this avenging Arm: But as I am, I have a Rod shall scourge you for your audacious Villanies. You seem amaz'd at the unusual Manner of my Talk. But to strike thee dumb — there — read that (throws him *Amintor's* Letter) see there the Reasons of my Anger, and tell me whether my Complaints are just or not. If the Facts alledg'd are true, the blackest Fiend in Hell is fair compar'd with thee. If they are false, you have Scope enough to punish him who has so ignominiously traduc'd you.

Clodio having read the Letter, was struck with the utmost Confusion, as not expecting such a strong Rebuff as this; and it was some Minutes before he could

could recollect his Spirits enough to return an Answer, which at length he did to this Effect. That if *Amintor* had not been the basest Scoundrel upon Earth, he would not accuse me with Things which I'm as great a Stranger to as the Child unborn. Long has he ow'd me a spiteful Turn for preventing his base and dishonourable Designs on a virtuous Lady; and now his Spleen has paid me to the full: For which, however, I shall call him to such a strict Account, that soon he will repent, unswear, and swear he never did advance such scandalous Untruths of me. Was I indeed guilty of the Crimes with which I'm here accus'd, I might justly expect the avenging Wrath of Heaven would mark me out for sure Destruction: But as I'm not conscious of the Guilt I'm charg'd with, and do defy the keenest Malice of my Enemies to prove it on me; suspend your Anger, and mitigate the Heat of your Resentment, till Time and Opportunity shall furnish me with Means to convince you of your Error, and enable me to demonstrate to you, how much you are abus'd, how much I'm wrong'd by that insinuating Villain,

Q

that

some slavish Ass, that for a little Provender, would bear the heaviest Burdens you could lay upon her? You're much mistaken if you think me such. Know, I am a Woman, and have a Spirit to resent Affronts, tho' offer'd by the haughtiest of your Sex; and you shall find I am not destitute of Means sufficient to revenge my Wrongs. Had I been a Man, you dar'd not to have us'd me thus; soon you'd have felt the Weight of my Resentment from this avenging Arm: But as I am, I have a Rod shall scourge you for your audacious Villanies. You seem amaz'd at the unusual Manner of my Talk. But to strike thee dumb — there — read that (throws him *Amintor's* Letter) see there the Reasons of my Anger, and tell me whether my Complaints are just or not. If the Facts alledg'd are true, the blackest Fiend in Hell is fair compar'd with thee. If they are false, you have Scope enough to punish him who has so ignominiously traduc'd you.

Clodio having read the Letter, was struck with the utmost Confusion, as not expecting such a strong Rebuff as this; and it was some Minutes before he could

could recollect his Spirits enough to return an Answer, which at length he did to this Effect. That if *Aminor* had not been the basest Scoundrel upon Earth, he would not accuse me with Things which I'm as great a Stranger to as the Child unborn. Long has he ow'd me a spiteful Turn for preventing his base and dishonourable Designs on a virtuous Lady; and now his Spleen has paid me to the full: For which, however, I shall call him to such a strict Account, that soon he will repent, unsay, and swear he never did advance such scandalous Untruths of me. Was I indeed guilty of the Crimes with which I'm here accus'd, I might justly expect the avenging Wrath of Heaven would mark me out for sure Destruction: But as I'm not conscious of the Guilt I'm charg'd with, and do defy the keenest Malice of my Enemies to prove it on me; suspend your Anger, and mitigate the Heat of your Resentment, till Time and Opportunity shall furnish me with Means to convince you of your Error, and enable me to demonstrate to you, how much you are abus'd, how much I'm wrong'd by that insinuating Villain,

Q

that

that shameless Libeller *Aminor*. Having thus said, he took his Leave, and mounted his Horse, not waiting for *Sophia's* Reply.

Clodio easily perceiv'd that he had stumbled into a Quicksand, in which the more he struggled, the deeper he sunk; and for some Time was perfectly at a Loss what Course to take. If he look'd behind him, he saw nothing but the voracious Hounds of the Law pursuing him for his Life, that is, his Money; if he cast his Eyes forward, he had the dismal Prospect of Disgrace and Infamy; if he view'd the State of his own Conscience, he was presented with such a horrid Picture of himself as frightned him almost to Death. In this melancholy Situation, he resolves (as the least of the Evils which he saw must befall him) to compromise Matters with *Leonora* and her Mother *Sophia*; and afterwards publickly to acknowledge *Melissa* for his lawful Wife. This Scheme he thought was very feasible; but to put it in Execution would be the main Difficulty: For he knew so well the fiery Temper of *Leonora*, that upon the least Hint of such a Design, she would

would break out into the most violent Clamours, and raise such a Storm about his Ears, as would exceed the Strength of his Patience to bear, and the most powerful Oratory to calm. To avoid which, on a second Consultation with his Thoughts, he judg'd it would be a more proper Way to send her and her Children to her Mother, to whom, by the Servant who waited on them, he would write a Letter, which should fully explain his Mind. Accordingly, under the plausible Pretence that her Mother wanted greatly to see her and her Grandchildren, the Coach was order'd to be got ready, which, with a suitable Equipage, convey'd them to *Bibury*; where on their Arrival a trusty Servant put into *Sophia's* Hands the following Epistle.

• Madam,

‘ I Am sensible in what an odd Light
 ‘ I shall appear to you, when I tell
 ‘ you, as I now do, that I have sent to
 ‘ you your Daughter and her Children,
 ‘ and that it is my express Will and Plea-
 ‘ sure, that neither she nor they shall
 ‘ ever call my House their Home any

' more. I need not now inform you
 ' what a perpetual Plague she has been
 ' to me, ever since the Parson licens'd her
 ' to call herself my Wife. You have
 ' often pitied my unhappy Condition,
 ' and wondered at my Patience in bear-
 ' ing, with so much Temper, her per-
 ' verse Humours. I had been much bet-
 ' ter pleased, if she had not obliged me
 ' to come to this Extremity; but since
 ' there is no other Remedy, I am sure I
 ' shall stand excused in the Jugment of
 ' every impartial Man, in thus ridding
 ' myself of a Burden which I was no
 ' longer able to bear. As to the Main-
 ' tenance which it will be proper for me
 ' to allow her, that shall be settled in
 ' such a Manner as to prevent any Liti-
 ' gations in Law, or Differences between
 ' us. I have not yet got together those
 ' Vouchers which are necessary for my
 ' Defence against the Accusations with
 ' which I am charged in *Aminor's* Li-
 ' bel, when I have, you shall be quickly
 ' satisfied, how much I am slandered,
 ' and you abused by that base Scoun-
 ' drel

' I am, Madam, with due Respect,
 ' Your most humble Servant,
 ' CLODIO.

Sophia immediately saw through the thin Disguise of *Clodio's* Design, and was now more confirmed than ever that *Aminor* had wrote nothing but the Truth. Calling therefore *Leonora* into her Closet, she opens to her the whole Scene of Iniquity ; for as yet she was ignorant of what had passed betwixt her Mother and *Aminor*. Upon hearing of which *Leonora* was agitated with a Variety of Passions ; Rage, Jealousy, Vexation, Revenge, alternately raised such a Storm within her that her Soul was like the raging and tumultuous Sea when Tempest-beaten by the furious Winds. Loud were her Exclamations against the hateful hated *Clodio*. O execrable Wretch ! said she, how hast thou blasted all my Hopes, and like some blue Pestilence hast wither'd the choicest Flowers of my Youth ! Too just has been my Jealousy, too late I am convinced of thy Unfaithfulness to my dishonour'd Bed. Base and perfidious ! Was it for this thou mad'st thy strumpet Cousin my Companion ? On her, it seems, much worthier, thou bestowd'st thy Love ; on me the glittering State of Coach and Equipage, which my own Fortune purchas'd.

The

The Grandeur then I might enjoy, thy
 Tenderneſs and conjugal Endearments
 were reſerv'd for her! Thus have I had
 but half a Husband, and the worſt half
 too. What have I ſeen, alas! What
 have I felt, ſince my unpropitious Stars
 have match'd me to this inhuman Mon-
 ſter! Such was his Surlineſs of Temper,
 ſo harſh and barbarous his Nature, that
 not a placid Look or friendly Word he
 ever could vouchſafe me. Even in thoſe
 ſoft Moments, when *Hymen* ſheds his
 kind and genial Influence, and all the
 Powers of Love combine to bleſs the
 nuptial Bed, he ſeems as if Compulſion
 led him on, and Fear or Duty forc'd him
 to perform the ſlavish Drudgery. The
 Reaſon's plain; another Object has Poſ-
 ſeſſion of his Heart, and I the Tool, the
 Utenſil, a mere domeſtick Animal, to be
 careſs'd or ſlighted as his Humour or
 Convenience ſuit. O! had I been the
 Wife of ſome good honeſt Ruſtick, who
 cultivates a little Farm that's all his own,
 who tills his Ground and labours with
 his Men; fatigu'd with toiling all the
 Day, at Night he ſups on wholeſome
 Food, and takes a chearful Glaſs; no
 Bacchanalian Company he wants, pleas'd
 with

with the Conversation of his virtuous Wife: Had Heaven but plac'd me in such a homely Station, I ne'er had known the Plagues of Greatness, but pass'd my Days in the sweet Calm of honest Industry and Peace. O! I could tare the Villain Limb from Limb, and hang a Limb in every publick Road throughout the Kingdom, to be a Terror and a Warning to those Brutes of Men, who with false Vows and Perjuries first seduce our Sex, and then with cruel Pastime triumph o'er our Injuries, insult us for those Miseries their Wickedness hath caus'd, and laugh at our Complaints of their unrighteous Dealing. Are there not Powers above that have the Care of Innocence and Virtue, that will revenge the wilful Breach of their most righteous Laws? O! all ye Powers Divine, unite your Plagues, and pour them full on *Clodio's* single Head. Blast his Possessions with some uncommon Judgment, torture his Body with Disease and Pain; frustrate all his Hopes and Expectations with unexpected Disappointments; let loose the Fiends of Hell to punish him with every Calamity that *Job* experienced, yet give him not the Patience to sustain them
like

like a Man; but let him fret and tear his tortur'd Soul, till he repents and owns the Wrongs that he has done to me.

Thus *Leonora* rav'd and spent her Spirits in all the Violence of the most aggravated Passion. In vain *Sophia* applied the Lenitives of Comfort, by assuring her of Relief and Justice, such as was in the Power of the Law to give; and that since Fortune had prov'd so unpropitious to her in a married Life, to trust herself no more to that uncertain State, but live retir'd and with her enjoy the Peace and Quiet of a calm Retreat. But here we must leave them for a while, and return to *Amintor*, whom we left deliberating on the severest Methods of punishing *Clodio* for his atrocious Crimes. But as it was necessary for that Purpose, to consult the Gentlemen of the Long Robe, he found himself oblig'd to come to *London*. Before he set out on his Journey, he collated all his Evidences and Vouchers of the Facts which were to support the intended Prosecution; but principally was he very careful of that large Collection of Letters which *Melissa* had obtain'd from
Clodio

Clodio, during that Part of her Correspondence with him in which she was directed by *Amintor*.

Melissa's Brothers, as positively resolv'd as *Amintor* to revenge her Cause, began the Prosecution against *Clodio*, and were vigorously assisted by him in carrying it on. They were already in Town, when *Amintor* and *Melissa* came up. *Clodio* was likewise there, and as soon as he heard of their Arrival, he endeavour'd by all Means possible, to have a private Conference with her; which she as constantly, evaded. *Clodio*, after many Attempts, finding all his Endeavours to see her vain and fruitless, sets Mr. *Subtil*, his Attorney, to work upon the same Business. *Subtil*, according to his Instructions, waited on *Melissa* at her Lodgings, to make her a new Proposal for an Accommodation. *Melissa*, not trusting to her own Judgment, prudently sent for *Amintor*, that he might hear and judge of what *Subtil* had to offer; who perceiving that every Thing he said was treated with Contempt, he chang'd his Discourse into a more serious Strain, and told her, that since the amicable Measures which he propos'd were

rejected, she must not be surpriz'd, that if the next Time he came, which would be on the Morrow, he brought with him an Order from her Husband *Clodio* to claim her; for that he had settled every Thing with *Sophia* and *Leonora*, with whom he was resolv'd to part, and publickly to own her (*Melissa*) as his lawful Wife. *Aminor*, in Answer, told him, that he thought Bigamy or a Plurality of Wives, was a monstrous Crime, and should esteem the Punishment inflicted by the Law in that Case, as a glaring Mark of Infamy. *Subtil* laugh'd, and said he was much mistaken, for that the Punishment was so trifling, that it was not worth mentioning; for he had once himself defended a Man who had seven Wives. He was going on to set forth his Abilities in his Profession, but being interrupted by a Message from *Clodio*, he broke off his Discourse, and took his Leave.

Clodio finding his Adversaries would hearken to no Terms of Accommodation, having first given his Lawyer the necessary Directions for his Defence, went into the Country; as did *Aminor* and *Melissa* soon afterwards, together with her

her Brothers; but before they set out, left positive Orders with their Lawyer, to prosecute the Cause with the utmost Vigilance and Dexterity he was Master of. The Cause is still in Hand and undecided, and perhaps, will be so for some Time; for there being pretty good Pickings on both Sides, the Lawyers will not be in haste to bring it to a speedy Determination.

As to the poor, unhappy *Leonora*, and her two innocent Babes, her's and their Case is truly piteous and lamentable. How far it is in the Power of the Law to relieve them, I must leave to the Sages of that Profession: But this I am pretty sure of, that neither Law nor Equity, nor common Sense, can justify *Clodio's* Inhumanity to them, nor give them an adequate Satisfaction for the Injuries they have and must suffer thro' his detestable Practices.

Thus have we at length brought this curious Story to a Conclusion, that is, so far as we intended to carry it; nor has any Thing material that we know of, been omitted in the Variety of Transactions that happened between the Parties. However, we should not have

finish'd it here, had not the Affair been at this Time litigated, and as yet undecided in the proper Court. When a final Decision is given, we may, very probably, resume it again, as we shall then be furnish'd with more original Pieces than we have been yet favour'd with, and better Lights than yet have come under our Cognizance.

In the mean while we shall entertain our Readers with another Narrative no less true than the foregoing, and as fruitful of extraordinary Incidents. In *Clo-dio's* Relation we see a Gentleman, descending beneath the Dignity of his Character, to play a Part which the meanest Man of Probity would be ashamed of; in the following we shall behold a Fellow of the lowest Class of Mankind, a Footman, ungratefully abusing his Master's Goodness, and under false Colours and Pretences, imposing himself on his Daughter for a Gentleman of Fortune in Disguise, and by his artful Insinuations finding Means to debauch her Virtue, and bring Dishonour on the Family. For this she was banish'd her Father's House, and suffer'd inexpressible Hardships, till Providence (which has
always

always an Eye upon those who fall from Virtue merely thro' the Frailties of Nature, or the too strong Importunities of those who by subtle Devices study its Destruction) at length rewarded her Sufferings with the full Completion of her Happiness. This Novel then will be a proper Sequel to the foregoing, as it will demonstrate that a Villain in low Life is actuated by the same bad Principles and Motives, and is hurried on by the same Passions to commit the same atrocious Crimes, as he that with the Air of a Gentleman, perpetrates the most horrid Outrages on the Innocent and the Virtuous. But, not to forestall the Reader's Curiosity, or detain him too long in the Entrance, we shall now proceed directly to the Narrative, which we have entitled,

VIRTUE Triumphant;

AND THE

MAN hang'd.

miable is Beauty
ed with good
al Education!

What numberless Charms has that Lady who, together with the Graces of her Person, is endow'd with those excellent Accomplishments of Mind which render Woman the Delight and Admiration as well of her own as the other Sex! At the same Time that the exact and agreeable Symetry of her Features attracts our Love, the Majesty of her Virtue forbids our too familiar Approaches. Even the Libertine, tho' captivated with her Charms, yet wonders at his own Cowardice (as he falsely fancies it) that durst not entertain a Thought to the Prejudice of her Honour; but is rather a silent Admirer of the heavenly Perfections, than a bold Adventurer in plundering such a rich Treasure of female Excellence. How abandon'd then must that Miscreant be, how lost to all Sense of Goodness, who can form Attempts, and lay his pernicious Schemes, to undermine and destroy, to ruin and desolate such a noble Structure which bears so near a Resemblance to Angelick Beings? Surely such a Man must have Principles from Hell, and from the infernal Regions of Hor

can harbour so much Mischief in his villainous Heart.

But however rare the Instances may be, either of a Lady of such uncommon Perfections as I have above described; or of a Man so prodigiously wicked as before intimated; yet two such Examples are recent in the Memory of some living; and as the Occurrences and Transactions that happened between them are of an extraordinary Nature, yet well attested for Truth and Fact, we thought it would be not only an agreeable, but a very useful Entertainment to all the young Ladies in *Great Britain*, to give them a History full of such Incidents which may concern every one of them to be acquainted with.

Some twelve or fourteen Years ago, in one of the Midland Counties of this Kingdom, liv'd *Horatio*, a Gentleman pretty far advanc'd in Years, of an opulent Estate, and happy in a fair Offspring. As he enjoy'd the Bounties of Providence in a very plentiful Manner, so had he the Respect of all the Gentlemen round the Country. In short he wanted nothing to make him as completely happy as his Heart could wish.

His

His Children were all grown up; his Sons he had settled in the World entirely to his Satisfaction, and his Daughters were bestow'd in Marriage to Persons who were in the most prosperous Circumstances; one Daughter only excepted, who, tho' near eighteen Years of Age, and the youngest, he had not found out a Match for suitable to her Merit and his own Desire; for he lov'd her tenderly; and indeed, she deserv'd his kindest Regards; for, being naturally of a mild and affable Disposition, she made it her daily Study to please and humour him in all those wayward Frailties that are incident to old Age.

But before we descend to Particulars, it will be necessary to describe *Horatio's* private Character and Temper; because on that will turn the principal Events in the ensuing Story. *Horatio* then was a Man perfectly good-natur'd, strictly just in his Concerns with Mankind, a religious Observer of Truth, faithful to his Engagements, had a sacred Regard to his Honour, ready to do good Offices to Persons of every Degree, the sincerest Friend, the most tender Husband, and the most indulgent Father. Yet he had

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one Frailty in his Nature, which often threw a Blemish over all his other good Qualities. He was too much addicted to Passion, and his Passion was so impetuous, that whoever had thwarted or affronted him, was sure to suffer the extremest Rigour of his Rage; and whatever Resolutions he made, tho' in the Height of his Fury, and how irrational or incongruous soever they were, he always prosecuted them to the very uttermost. For so great was his Regard to Veracity and his Honour, that he would not suffer either of them to be impeach'd, tho' the Performanee of his threaten'd Vengeance, should involve him, or the dearest of his Family in the most troublesome Difficulties and Distresses. To repent of his Rashness, he thought, was a Weakness beneath the Dignity of a Man, and as he made no Allowance to himself for the Frailties of Nature, so neither would he grant it to any one else; but every Individual, under his Jurisdiction, must punctually fulfil the Duties of his or her Station, or incur the Severities of his keenest Wrath. Thus he was rather dreaded than belov'd, and his Family

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was always in the utmost Pain for Fear of giving Offence.

Far different was the Temper of his Wife *Sophronia*. She was full of Kindness and Benevolence; and her Servants executed her Orders with Pleasure, because they knew she would forgive Mistakes and Errors unwittingly or unwarily committed; and her Children obey'd her Commands with all imaginable Cheerfulness, because never accompanied with any harsh or rating Expressions, but always given in the mildest and most affectionate Terms. But that which most of all endear'd her both to her Children and Servants was, that being perfectly acquainted with her Husband's violent Temper, she made it her constant Care to hide and conceal every trifling Offence from his Knowledge, which when with all her Diligence she was not able to do, she endeavoured to mollify his Anger, by excusing the Fault by some officious good-natur'd Lie. Thus as she studied the Peace and Tranquillity of her Family, she was belov'd and revered by every Member of it.

This Description of the Father and Mother, naturally brings us to speak of their

their Daughter *Emilia*, who, indeed, is the principal Subject of these Memoirs, and for whose Sake alone they are wrote.

Emilia (as before hinted) was a Lady of about eighteen Years of Age, of a healthful and florid Constitution; the Features of her Face were form'd with the most exact Regularity, and the Rose and the Lilly strove with equal Vigour for the Superiority in her Complexion; Nature herself furnish'd the Colours, which the Ladies of this Metropolis take so much Pains to imitate with Wash and Paint. Her Eyes were vivacious and full of Fire, yet darted no infectious Rays that might kindle impure Desires in the Heart of the Beholder, but commanded Respect at the same Instant that they lighted up the Flame of Love. Her Hair, when loosen'd from her Head-dress, flow'd gracefully in sable Curls about her Shoulders. Her Shape was, as *Prior* describes that of his *Nut-brown Maid*,

Fine by Degrees, and beautifully less.

Nor were the noble Qualities of her Soul less esteemable than the Charms of her Person. None could ever impeach

her Chastity either in Look, Word, or Action; and her Behaviour was so remarkably modest and decent, that it was usual for Parents to recommend it to their Daughters as an Example most worthy of their Imitation. Her Temper was chearful, affable and obliging, and so free from Pride and Haughtiness, that her Inferiors, even of the lowest Rank, had never Reason to complain of Ill-usage from her. Her Wit was as entertaining as her good Sense was instructive; and her natural Endowments were improv'd by the best Education that her Parents could bestow upon her. She was not only vers'd in those polite Arts of Dancing and Musick, but likewise well instructed in all other female Accomplishments; was perfect Mistress of her Needle, and by her Mother was taught the Management of a Family. Such were the Excellencies of this incomparable young Lady, which made her the Darling of her Parents, the Delight of her Friends, and the Object of Love and Admiration of all the young Gentlemen round the Country.

But, alas! how frail are those Hopes, how delusive those Expectations which

are built on human Perfections ! Beauty is aptly compar'd to a Flower, which when cropt, instantly begins to fade and wither. The soundest Judgment is often over-reach'd by the Subtilties of Art. Virtue, tho' grounded in Education, strengthen'd by the Austerity of Parents, and confirmed by good Habits, is too frequently sapp'd and undermin'd by the Flattery of designing Sycophants, or falls a Sacrifice to the Treachery of a Villain, who under the Appearance of the greatest Sanctity, carries the Devil in his Heart, and has nothing but Mischief and Destruction in his Head.

As *Horatio* was possess'd of a large Fortune, he kept an Equipage suitable to his Rank and Station in the World. Among his Livery-Servants was one whose Name was *Tom Sharply*, and lately come into his Service. *Tom* had been Footman to young Lord *Forage*, famous for his Gallantries among the Fair Sex, and was a very necessary Implement to his Lordship in carrying on his Amours. *Tom* by this Means had frequent Opportunities of being acquainted with the Frailties and Foibles, the various Tempers and Dispositions,
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the Inclinations and most prevalent Passions of Ladies of all Ranks and Degrees. He was a perfect Master of Address, and knew the Language that was proper to be given to a Prude, as well as that which was most agreeable to a Coquette; he was perfectly vers'd in the various Ways of approaching Ladies according to their different Humours and Principles. He had learnt from his Master the Difference of Stile and Manner in his Attacks upon a Woman who was a strenuous Professor of Virtue, and one who seem'd only to want an Opportunity of shewing her Readiness to oblige him. Thus *Tom*, by being constantly employ'd in the Service, and, in his private Practice, conforming himself exactly to the Example of his Master, was well furnish'd with all those Engines that are commonly us'd in battering a Woman's Heart. So well was he instructed in the amorous Dialect, that he seem'd a Magazine of Darts, Flames, Roses, Lillies, Diamonds, Jewels, Oaths, Lies, and Perjuries. If any Stratagem was judg'd necessary to gain a Point with a Lady that was more than ordinary on her Guard, *Tom* was a perfect *Proteus*, and could

change himself into any Shape to procure Success to his Master's Intrigues. But his Lordship having detected his Roguery in designing to supplant him in the good Graces of a Lady whom he had employ'd *Tom* to procure for him, first can'd him heartily, and then turn'd him off.

Tom was now at his Wit's End, and knew not which Way to turn himself, being sensible that no Gentleman would take him into his Service, without a Character from his former Master; nay, that the very Character of his Master would be an Argument with People of Sobriety and Credit for refusing to admit him into their Families. Having for a good while revolv'd these Things in his Mind, he thought it his best Way to desire his Lordship, in pity to his forlorn Condition, not to deprive him of his future Subsistence, by denying him a Certificate of his honest and sober Behaviour during the Time he had the Honour to serve him. Well, *Tom*, says my Lord, tho' you was a sad Dog to endeavour to seduce my Mistress from me, yet I am not that hard-hearted *Turk*, never to forgive an Injury. Get you a Master, and I'll

I'll give an Account of you, better perhaps than you deserve. *Tom* thank'd his Lordship, and withdrew.

It was not long e're *Tom* was inform'd that *Horatio* had turn'd off one of his Servants for some Misdemeanour. To him he applies, and after many Questions ask'd and answer'd, *Horatio* bids him bring a Note from his late Master, certifying his good Behaviour. *Tom* immediately goes to his Lordship, tells him his Errand, and entreats the Performance of his Promise. His Lordship took Pen in Hand, and wrote the following Lines.

THIS is to certify, that the Bearer hereof, Thomas Sharply, is a very honest Fellow, and behav'd himself, while with me, with more Sobriety than became his Place; and that the only Reason I had for dismissing him from my Service, was, because, instead of obeying my Orders, the Rascal always pretended that his Conscience would not suffer him to be so wicked.

FORAGE.

Tom

Tom took the Note with great Thankfulness, and put it in his Pocket without reading it, not doubting but his Lordship had given him such a Character as would recommend him to the Service of the Gentleman to whom he had made his Application. Away he goes with all Speed to *Horatio*, who having read the Note, could scarce forbear smiling. Do you know, Friend, said he, what Account my Lord *Forage* gives of you? No indeed, Sir, says *Tom*, trembling and turning pale; for I just now came from his Lordship, who gave me the Note, which I instantly put in my Pocket, nor has it been open'd before I put it into your Hands. Very well, says *Horatio*; he has given you here a very odd Kind of Certificate; but as I am no Stranger to his Lordship, nor the Nature of his Service, I will take his Recommendation, and you may put on my Livery; only one Thing you are to observe, that your Employment under me, will be widely different from that which you was engag'd in under his Lordship. *Tom* bow'd, and went as he was order'd to the Wardrobe to dress himself in his new Livery.

Tom being now become one of *Horatio's* Domesticks, was very diligent and assiduous in doing the Duties of his Station. He was soon inform'd by the other Servants, of the Temper of his Master and Lady; and he had Sense enough to take their Instructions in good Part, and to regulate his Behaviour accordingly.

The particular Service which *Tom* was appointed to, was to wait at Table, and to attend the Persons and observe the Directions of his Lady *Sophronia*, and her Daughter *Emilia*; a Station which *Tom* was greatly delighted with. For, as to *Sophronia*, she was so humane and condescending in giving out her Orders, that it was a Pleasure to execute them; and as to *Emilia*, her Demeanour was in all Respects, so affable and courteous, that *Tom* thought himself the happiest Man alive when he had any of her Commands to obey.

Tom was overjoy'd to find himself so fortunately situated; and long he might have continu'd so, had he took Prudence for his Guide. But, alas! how hard is it, even for the best of Men to keep their irregular Appetites in Subjection, and to suffer Reason always to hold the Helm

Helm of their Passions? How much more difficult was it for one of *Tom's* profligate Life and Morals, to keep within the Bounds which Religion and Virtue have prescribed to the Actions of every Man? When once vicious Habits have taken Root in the Heart, they are not to be eradicated but with Abundance of Pains, much sober and sedate Reflection, and strong and well-grounded Resolutions to reverse the bad Conduct that has been hitherto pursued. *Tom*, however, was no Philosopher; and tho' the Duties of his Station might restrain him from taking those Liberties which his Inclination prompted him to, yet his Proneness to Vice was so predominant, that he wanted only Opportunity to be as wicked as ever.

One Part of *Tom's* Business was, as above hinted, to wait at Table, both at Dinner-time, and when the Ladies drank Tea; so that he had frequent Occasions of observing and contemplating the happy Disposition and inestimable Excellencies of his young Lady *Emilia*: and the more he view'd her, the more he was struck with her Charms; and his Love increas'd to that violent Degree,

that he could neither eat nor sleep for several Days and Nights successively, and his Anguish was the more insupportable, as he utterly despair'd of ever enjoying the dear Object of his Wishes. Thus he languish'd and pin'd away; the Colour forsook his Cheeks, and the Flesh his Bones; and such a visible Alteration was observ'd, as well in the Decay of his Health as in the melancholy Turn of his Temper, which was naturally debonair and sprightly, that his Fellow-Servants were often telling him, that he was certainly in Love, and were mighty desirous of knowing who the fair Charmer was that had brought him to that deplorable Condition; for surely, said they, she must be some cruel Tygress, that could have no Pity for such a handsome Youth as he was; or some Tyrant Beauty, that made Conquests with the only View of tormenting her Slaves when she had got 'em fast in her Chains. To all which *Tom* made little or no Answer, but sigh'd as if his Heart was ready to break.

Tom being no longer able to support his miserable Life, under the Anguish of Heart, which he continually felt, without

out any Prospect of bettering his Condition; at last sets himself seriously to consider if there was no possible Relief for one in his unhappy Condition. Then he run over in his Mind his former Course of Life, while he serv'd Lord *Forage*; the many Stratagems he had us'd to bring the Girls to his Lure, and the various Ways and Means practic'd by his Lordship to allure the Fair and the Innocent to his Embraces and their own Ruin. But having ruminated a long Time, and conn'd over all the roguish Tricks that both he and his Master had put in Use to seduce and debauch the Fair Sex, he could think of nothing to suit his present Purpose. For, the Lady whom he ador'd, he was but too sensible, was quite of another Stamp, and mov'd in a higher Sphere, than those he had formerly to do with. He knew that any Attempt on her Virtue, by one in his Station, would be so far from answering his End, that he should bring some terrible Mischief on his own Head; * that his Offers of Love would be treated with Contempt and Disdain; and that the first Step he should make in Courtship

ship would be follow'd by an immediate Dismission from his Service.

Tom, while he liv'd with his Lordship, had read abundance of Plays and Romances; for his Master's Library consisted chiefly of such Sort of Collections. *Tom* now employed his Thoughts in recollecting the numerous Stratagems he had read which Lovers put in Practice to obtain their Mistresses. At last, he be-thought himself of a Case, which, with a little Variation, he might adopt for his own. It was of a Gentleman that had fallen desperately in Love with a young Lady, but was debarr'd all Manner of Access to her by the rigid Severity of her Father. But nothing is impossible to Love; and that Man is unworthy to possess the Charms of Beauty who refuses to risque any Danger to obtain it. The Gentleman set his Invention to work, which soon furnish'd him with this Scheme. He disguis'd himself in the Habit of a Footman, and in that Quality got into the Service of the Lady's Father; and by this Means soon accomplish'd his Purpose. This, said *Tom* to himself, is a lucky Thought. Nothing could happen so *a propos*. I already am
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that which this Gentleman took so much Pains to appear. I have, Thanks to my lucky Stars, got Hold of the Clue which leads to the Bower where my whole Bliss is deposited, and I will follow it thro' all the winding Labyrinth, till it brings me to the fair Lady who resides there, and is the End of my aspiring Ambition.

Accordingly *Tom* lays his Plot, and prepares the Part he design'd to act. The first Thing he judg'd necessary to be done, was, to declare his Passion for *Emilia* by a Letter couch'd in such cautious and wary Terms, as at least not to give Offence, if it should not happen to please. Having therefore got his writing Materials ready, he sets himself down, takes his Pen, and blots and scrawls over half a Quire of Paper, before he could form an Epistle to his Mind. At last, having beat his Brains and wrack'd his Invention for a Week together, he hammer'd out the following rhapsodical Epistle.

‘ Most Adorable Lady,

‘ **T**O tell you that you are more excellent than the rest of your Sex,
‘ would

' would be to say no more than what all
 ' the World knows to be true; and to
 ' enumerate your Merits, is past my
 ' Skill in Arithmetick to recount; and
 ' therefore let it suffice to say that you
 ' are an inestimable Jewel without one
 ' Speck or Flaw; that your Body, more
 ' beautiful than an Angel's, is animated
 ' with a Soul as perfect as one of those
 ' celestial Spirits that were never stain'd
 ' with an impure Thought. It is with
 ' Pleasure and Wonder that I behold
 ' you; and it is almost Profaness to sup-
 ' pose you one of our mortal Race. Be
 ' not therefore surpriz'd when I tell you
 ' that I have long ador'd you almost as a
 ' Deity; and that the Power of your
 ' Charms is so great, that it has trans-
 ' form'd me from my former Existence,
 ' which was that of a Gentleman, to
 ' that of an humble Slave, to wait at
 ' your Table, and to execute your Plea-
 ' sure upon all Occasions. This I have
 ' hitherto done with inexpressible De-
 ' light, and would not change my Ser-
 ' vice for the Grandeur of a Crown.
 ' 'Tis true, Madam, that so long as I
 ' keep myself conceal'd in this servile
 ' Equipage, I shall answer one End of
 my

' my Design in wearing it; which was,
 ' to be myself a Witness of those Excel-
 ' lencies and noble Endowments in you,
 ' of which the World speaks so loud.
 ' And now I can truly affirm, that com-
 ' mon Fame is not always a Liar, as is
 ' generally said; for in this she has pro-
 ' claim'd the Truth, that you are the
 ' very Paragon and *Phoenix* of your Sex.
 ' I feel the ineffable Power of your
 ' Charms, thrilling thro' every Faculty
 ' of my Soul. So that in endeavouring
 ' in the Disguise of a Servant to satisfy
 ' my Curiosity, I am really become the
 ' very Thing I only personated; I am
 ' to all Intents and Purposes your most
 ' humble Slave, bound fetter'd in the
 ' Chains of Love; yet so agreeable, so
 ' happy is my Servitude, that I desire
 ' never to be free. I have only to add,
 ' at present, that I entreat the Favour
 ' of your Permission to explain myself
 ' more at large, to inform you who and
 ' what I am, that it is in my Power
 ' to make you as happy as the best Gen-
 ' tleman in the Country can do, and
 ' that I am, most amiable Lady, with
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' most profound Veneration and Respect,
 ' Your most faithful Slave,
 ' constant Admirer,
 ' and everlasting Lover,
 ' (not *Tom Sharply*, but)
 ' CHARLES CNAMONT.

Tom having finished this extraordinary Epistle, he folded it up very nicely, seal'd it, and finding *Emilia* alone, gave it into her own Hands, and then, with a very low Obeisance, instantly withdrew. *Emilia* did not a little wonder at *Tom's* particular Manner and Behaviour on delivering his Letter, as well as his sudden retiring from her Presence. But as Curiosity is natural to the Fair Sex, that quickly prompted her to examine the Contents of this Paper. But how great was her Amazement when she had read it thro' ! Is it possible said she to herself, for Love to work such a Miracle as this ? What ! make a Man to lay aside the Character of a Gentleman, to become the Drudge of a Family, and descend to the base and slavish Condition of a Footman ! This is indeed the greatest

est Proof a Lover can give of his Affection; and I much Question, whether in the whole Train of my pretended Admirers, who daily pester me with their amorous Suits, there is one of them, would give such a Testimonial of his Sincerity. But suppose this Mr. *Chamont*, as he calls himself, should be a Villain in Masquerade, and in this Disguise, be carrying on some pernicious Project to the Prejudice of my Honour. It behoves me therefore to be on my Guard, and to watch carefully against the Deceits of Men, who, I have heard, will change themselves into all Shapes, to gain their Ends on weak and credulous Woman. Yet, in my Opinion, a Lady may as well be too cautious and reserved, as too free and open, in the Reception she gives to a Lover. Let me therefore call Prudence to my Council, and take Advice of Discretion. I think there can be no Harm in gratifying my Curiosity in hearing the Account that he can give of himself; for then I shall have the same Liberty, as I now have, of admitting or rejecting whatever he has to offer. But should he, upon the strictest Scrutiny I can make, appear really and

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actually

actually the Person he pretends to be, a Gentleman capable of making me happy in all Respects, why should I refuse him the Satisfaction he desires, or deny him a reciprocal Return of my Love, which by a very uncommon Debasement of himself, he has been so assiduous to acquire? Where, or from whom can I ever expect to meet with such a surprizing Proof of the sincerest Affection? On the contrary, if he should prove a Counterfeit (of which, however, I cannot at present entertain any Suspicion) what has he to look for, but Shame and Disgrace, and an immediate Discharge, from his Service? Thus *Emilia* debated this important Affair with herself, but imparted the Secret to Nobody, resolving to rely on her own Judgment in the Experiment she intended to make of the Genuineness of *Tom's* Pretensions.

Emilia was now impatient for some lucky Opportunity of satisfying her Curiosity; and in order to cut off any long Delays in an Affair of such Importance, she immediately goes to her Mother, and tells her, that she was indebted to young Lady *Saunter* for a Visit, and design'd to pay it her the next Morning

Morning; that it being fine Summer-Weather, a Walk over the Fields would be pleasant and healthful, and much preferable to riding in a Coach in the Dust and Sun; and that *Tom* the Footman would be all the Guard and Equipage she should want.

The Morning being come, *Emilia* orders *Tom* to dress himself, in order to wait on her in a Visit she was going to pay to Lady *Saunter*. *Tom* easily understood her Meaning, and pleas'd himself with imagining that the Conquest was more than half made, and that he should be soon in Possession of the Object he so passionately lov'd.

Tom was instantly ready, and *Emilia* soon put him in his delightful Office of attending her in her Morning's Walk. Being got at about a Field's Distance from the House, they were to pass thro' a Wood, which with the green Branches of the Trees, cover'd them from the intense Heat of the Sun, whose Rays had pour'd on 'em too impetuously in the open Field. Here finding a Seat at the Foot of a venerable Oak that spread his Arms far and wide to shelter them from the Inclemency of the Weather, she sat
down

down, and bid *Tom* sit down by her, *Tom*, said she, (for so I must yet call you) what in the Name of Wonder induc'd you to write that extravagant Letter which you put into my Hands Yesterday? Surely you have but a very slender Opinion of my Understanding, to imagine I can be so easily impos'd upon. You a Gentleman of Fortune! How does it appear? Where lies your Estate? Where live your Relations, your Parents Friends or Acquaintance, that can give any Account of you? Where is the Mansion-house of your Ancestors? For I never heard of the Name which you call yourself by, in these Parts of the Country, nor any where else unless it was in a Play. Friend, have a Care, make good your Assertions, and give me plain and demonstrative Evidence that you really are what you pretend to be; otherwise, instead of reaping any Advantage from this notable Scheme of yours, you may have Reason to repent your Folly as long as you live.

Tom had Sense enough to perceive, that now or never, was the Time to push for the Prize he so earnestly wish'd to obtain; and that if he could but produce

duce such plausible Reasons as would convince *Emilia* of his Gentility, and by the mere Dint of his Oratory deceive her into a Belief of the Uprightness of his Intention, without suffering her to take too near an Inspection of his Circumstances, the Business is done. As soon therefore as he observ'd that *Emilia* had done speaking, he rose from his Seat, and falling on one Knee to the Ground, he address'd her in the following Terms.

Madam,

I think myself highly honour'd in the Permission you have given me of pleading my own Cause; and if I don't demonstrate to you the Truth of every Article in my Letter, I will be content you should think me the greatest Scoundrel upon Earth, and to undergo the severest Punishment your just Resentment can inflict upon me. I know the Danger I run in Case I am found tardy, or defective in the Testimonials I shall bring to make good my Assertions; Nor am I less sensible of the Reach of your Understanding, to which every Thing is comprehensible, and which can penetrate thro' Frauds and Deceits of all Kinds

Kinds, tho' cover'd with all the Subtily that the Wit of Man can invent, Besides, I should be the greatest Fool that Nature ever cloath'd with Humanity, to suppose that I could escape the Fury of your Vengeance upon detecting me as an Impostor. Besides, if I could imagine it possible to deceive you, and even to escape with Impunity afterwards, I could never hope for the least Share in your Esteem or Affection; for what Woman who knows she has been impos'd upon in an Affair of the last Importance can forgive the Offender? Or, rather, would she not persecute him with her Hatred, and continually reproach him with his villainous Usage of her? What Peace, what Comfort, what Satisfaction can such a Man have, either in his own Mind, or in the Enjoyment of Life? Would a Man in his Senses, for a Moment's Pleasure, sacrifice the Happiness of his whole Life? And should I not be guilty of the most egregious Folly, even Madness itself, to run the Risque of such infinite Hazards as I must do, whether I gain my Point or not, should I be detected of Falshood, Prevarication, or insincere Dealing? But
 Madam

Madam, far be such impious and fallacious Designs from me. I have too great a Reverence for your Virtue, too high a Value for your personal Merits, to harbour the least Thought to the Prejudice of your Honour, or Disturbance of your Peace. Love only inspir'd me with the Resolution to assume this Disguise, in order to facilitate my Addresses, and gain Admission to your Presence. For, being a Stranger in the Country, and quite unknown to your Father, I had no other Method of declaring my Passion, and expressing the Veneration I have for your Person, than, under this Concealment, to introduce myself into your Company. I said, I was a Stranger in this Country; and so indeed I am to every one except my Lord *Forage*, who is my very good Friend and Relation. He will inform you, that I am a Gentleman, as well by Education, as by a large Estate which I possess in *Northumberland*; where my Ancestors have resided and flourish'd for many Ages, and have made no inconsiderable Figure both in Arms and at the Bar, as well in a Civil as a Military Capacity. But, Madam, I should not have boasted of

the Antiquity of my Family, were it not to satisfy you, that the Alliance I propose is not wholly unworthy your Regard. For in my Opinion, if a Man has no Merits of his own to recommend him, those of his Ancestors will be rather a Foil and a Reproach to him than add any Thing to his Honour among the discerning Part of Mankind. But I am far from imagining, that my Deserts, or indeed the Deserts of all Mankind, supposing I had them collected in my own Person, could entitle me to an Equality to those invaluable Perfections, those illustrious Qualities, those noble, those excellent Endowments, that have render'd you the Delight and Admiration of the Men, and the Envy of your own Sex.

While *Tom* was thus speaking his studied Harangue with all the Energy he was Master of; *Emilia's* Eyes were not idle, but survey'd him very exactly, and observ'd his Action, his Manner and Behaviour with the most scrupulous Accuracy; and upon the whole, fancied she saw something in his Person that denoted him to be of a Rank much superior to his present Station, and that she could plainly see the Gentleman thro'

thro' the Disguise of his present Habit. However, not to appear too forward in a Matter of such Consequence, she ask'd him where he had seen her, and on what Occasion he had entertain'd such a Passion for her?

Tom, who was prepar'd with an Answer to every Objection, reply'd, that he had more than once been a hunting with her in Company with her Father and Brothers, when my Lord *Forage*, to oblige the Country Gentlemen, has given them the Diversion of his Dogs. I have seen, said he, with Admiration, with what easy Grace you have sat your Horse, and have felt the utmost Pain when I have beheld you leaping Bars and Gates and Hedges with as much Pleasure and Unconcern as the boldest Sportsman among them. But, Madam, the particular Time when I lost my Heart, and became a Captive to your all-powerful Charms, was, at a Ball that was given by Sir *Lancelot Merrymake* at his own House to all the Gentlemen and Ladies round the Country. Your Ladyship was there, and you may remember, that my Lord *Forage* danc'd with Lady *Sprightly*, who has since, as Report says,

prov'd pregnant by him, the Fruirs of an Intrigue that commenc'd between them that very Night. I, who was a Stranger to all then present, except his Lordship, led Lady *Gaily* thro' a Dance. You, Madam, had one Mr. *Freelove* for your Partner, whose Happiness I envied, and was very angry with him for no other Reason, but because he had the good Fortune of having the completest Lady in the whole Assembly by the Hand. After a Cessation of the Country Dances, you was pleas'd, in your own Person, to oblige the Company with a Minuet, which you perform'd with such a Grace, and such a glorious Display of all your Charms, as set my whole Soul in a Rapture; and the God of Love discharg'd his Artillery with such Force and Efficacy at my Breast, that I soon found that the Wounds which he made were incurable, and I must have died on the Spot, had not Hope pour'd into them a little of her healing Balm, and given me a Prospect, tho' a very distant one, of the full Fruition of the Object which then so forcibly struck me.

Thus *Tom*, by telling *Emilia* some Things she knew to be true, the more

easily

easily gain'd her Belief to such Things which depended wholly on his own Veracity. She knew she had often been a hunting as he had said; that she had danc'd at such an Assembly, with the other Particulars he had mention'd, and likewise remember'd that Lady Gaily had a strange Gentleman for her Partner, who, from a Similitude of Features, Shape and Size, she perswaded herself was the very identical Person now before her; as indeed he was, and put in a Dress proper for the Occasion by his Lord, the better to assist him in any Enterprize his Lordship might engage in among the Females at such a publick Resort. Putting all these Circumstances together, *Emilia* began to think there was some Foundation for her Belief that *Tom* was really a Gentleman, and not the Person she had hitherto taken him for. His plausible Story had made a visible Impression upon her Mind; for she began to put on a very serious and thoughtful Air, as if pondering in her Mind the Weight of his Arguments, and considering in what Manner she should govern her Conduct in this critical Affair.

Tom soon perceiv'd that he had gain'd
more

more than half the Victory; for according to the Poet,

The Woman that deliberates is lost.

Since therefore the Advantage was manifestly on his Side, he resolves to push for a compleat Triumph. He entreated her to consider the Constancy of his Love, his inviolable Fidelity, the Service and Hardships he had undergone for her Sake, and was yet willing to suffer, to convince her, if she was not yet convinc'd, of the Fervency of his Passion, and of his sincere and honourable Intentions towards her. There is one Favour, however, said he, that I would entreat of you, and that is, that you conceal the Secret of my Love from the Knowledge of your Parents, or any other Friend; because after the Consummation of our Nuptials, (a Happiness I earnestly hope for!) I would have the Pleasure of carrying you off privately to my Seat in *Northumberland*, and of bringing you again triumphantly in a Coach and Six, with a suitable Equipage, and presenting you in all your Grandeur to your Father at his own House.

Sir

Sir, said *Emilia*, I know not what Answer to make to all the fine Things you have said. It's very possible, nay, I find myself too much inclin'd to believe, that you have spoke nothing but the Truth. However, let the Thing rest here for the present; for it requires my most serious Consideration; and I must take such Advice as Reason and my own Honour shall furnish me with. A Day or two, I presume, will be no great Intrusion upon your Patience; in which Time I promise you my final Resolution. Then reaching out her Hand to him (for he was all this while on his bended Knee) he eagerly laid hold of it, and kissing it with a rapturous Joy, jump'd up, and at the same Instant catching her in his Arms, he almost smother'd her with Kisses, which she faintly struggled to oppose. Being at length both of them got upon their Legs, they proceeded in their Walk, and *Emilia* having finish'd her Visit to Lady Saunter, she and *Tom* return'd the same Way they came. *Tom* would fain have entertain'd her again upon the Subject of his Love; but *Emilia* in positive Terms enjoin'd him Silence, till she had
duly

duly weighed and considered the Things which he had already declar'd to her; since on the Result of her Deliberation depended the future Felicity of her Life.

Tom was now in real Purgatory; a State which the Papists have plac'd between Heaven and Hell. The Lot was cast, and he had as much Reason to fear it would turn up a Blank, as that it would prove a Prize. Should *Emilia* be so wise as to consult with any Friend who had any Knowledge or Experience of Mankind, and advise her to inspect narrowly into his Pretensions, he was conscious they would not bear the Test, and that the Consequence would be, that he should be cast at once from the Summit of his Hopes and expected Happiness, and plung'd into irretrievable Misery and Despair. Again; should she privately employ a Friend to enquire of Lord *Forage*, whether his Lordship would vouch the Truth of what *Tom* had asserted, namely, that he was a familiar Acquaintance of his Lordship's, before he had previously let him into the Secret; this would again disconcert all his Measures, and ruin him effectually.

Tom

Tom therefore, all the next Day, was very curious in examining her Looks, her Humour, and the Manner of her speaking to him, if he could by any Means discover her Sentiments in relation to the Affair of which with the utmost Anxiety he expected her Decision. *Emilia* perceiv'd his Perplexity, and resolving to hold him in Suspence till the last Moment of the Time she had fix'd for explaining herself, kept on the Reserve, nay, she abated somewhat of her natural good Humour, and gave her Orders in much harsher Terms than she us'd to do. This puzzled *Tom* to the last Degree; so that doubting of the Success, he was once or twice on the Point of running quite away. But collecting by Degrees his scatter'd Spirits, he begins to think that the Prize was worth waiting for; and therefore, whatever was the Consequence, he would not cowardly quit his Station for fear of losing what he had, with so much Pains and Hazard, endeavour'd to obtain.

Emilia, in the mean while had a thousand anxious Thoughts, a thousand uneasy Reflections crouded in upon her Mind. What, said she to herself, if this

Man, notwithstanding this fair and plausible Account he has given of himself, should prove to be some designing Villain, who having once got his Ends of me, should abscond and leave me to curse my own easy Credulity, and to deplore the irreparable Loss of my Honour, my Innocence, my good Name, my Friends, and every Thing that is dear and valuable to me. How shall I be able to bear the Storm of my Father's Rage, my Mother's Reproaches, the Taunts of Scandal, and even the Stings of my own Conscience? But then, on the other Hand, what Reason have I to doubt the Reality of what this Gentleman affirms of himself? Has he not told me many Truths, which I know to be true? Why then should I question his Veracity, in Things which appear equally probable? He appeals to the Knowledge of my Lord *Forage* for the Truth and Certainty of the Facts he alledges; which surely he would not do, if he knew it was in the Power of his Lordship to contradict him. Neither can I persuade myself, that a Person of his Lordship's Rank and Character would countenance a Villain in such a pernicious Scheme as the Ruin of

of a reputable Family. But suppose I should take the Advice of a Friend in a Matter of such Importance? But to what Purpose? My own Understanding tells me, that I ought to act with the utmost Caution in an Affair, the Success of which must determine my future Happiness or Misery. If it succeeds well, of which I have not the least Reason to doubt, there is nothing within the Compass of a Woman's Ambition, but what I shall be in Possession of; a Coach and Six, gay Attendance, Respect and Homage, and ranking with the first Class of Gentry in the whole County. Well, but suppose it should happen otherwise; and instead of seeing myself advanc'd to this imaginary Height of Grandeur, I find myself reduc'd to the lowest Degree of Wretchedness, and in no better a Station or Quality than the humble ragged Wife of a rascally Footman? Pshaw! that's impossible; neither will I believe, that Heaven has destin'd me to so bad a Fate. However, come what will, I am determin'd to make the Experiment.

Towards the Close of the second Day
 Y 2 after

after their first Conversation, it being a fine Summer's Evening, she orders *Tom* to wait on her, for she was going to take a Walk down the Grove. This Grove was about a Quarter of a Mile long, finely shaded with Trees, pav'd with a smooth Verdure of Grass, and enamell'd with Daisies and other rural Flowers, and terminated with an Alcove, which was cover'd with Jessamine, Honey-Suckles, and Ever-greens; so as entirely to conceal the Persons who retir'd to it from the View of any Body that might be walking in the adjacent Fields. *Tom* follow'd his Lady with an aking Heart, trembling Hands, and tottering Legs; not knowing whether he had more Reason to hope or despair; and doubtful of his Fate, for he was sensible that he was now going to receive Sentence, which must determine his Destiny either for Life or Death, for Happiness or Misery.

Being come to the Alcove, *Emilia* went in and sat down, and gave *Tom* Leave to sit on the Bench opposite to her. Then assuming a serious Air, Sir, said she, I have maturely weigh'd and considered your Proposals, and have examin'd your Allegations with all the Circum-
 spection

spection I am Mistress of; and can see no sufficient Grounds whereon to fix any Resolution in Favour of your Pretensions. It's very possible that whatever you have told me is true; but I shall risque too much in putting my whole Stock of Happiness upon the single Cast of such an uncertain Die as your Veracity. And therefore if you can give me no better Satisfaction, than your bare Word, in relation to what you affirm of yourself, you must excuse me if I engage no farther in this Affair.

These Words struck *Tom* like a Thunder-clap; his Countenance chang'd, and his Tongue falter'd, so that he knew not how to make an Answer. And had not *Emilia* been infatuated with the Thoughts of her future Grandeur, she might plainly have perceived Guilt in his Face. *Tom* was immediately sensible of his Error, and soon recovering his usual Assurance, thus reply'd: Madam, said he, I am greatly troubled, that you should suspect my Honour, which was never yet impeach'd, and which is, in my Opinion, as much the Part of a Gentleman, as any other Qualification whatever. A Scoundrel and a Villain, indeed,

indeed, may cloak his Wickedness with specious Pretences: But may the great Avenger of Injustice and Wrongs done to the Innocent and Virtuous, accumulate all his Plagues on my wretched Head, and make me an Example to be wonder'd at by all Mankind, if I have deceiv'd you, or intend so to do, in any one Particular that I have affirmed of myself; of which I will yet give you a demonstrative Proof, as must perfectly satisfy you with respect to any Doubt that you may have remaining. I will wait on my Lord *Forage*, and beg the Favour of a Line under his own Hand, certifying his Knowledge of me, and my Family, and that I am really the Person I have describ'd myself to be. Well, said *Emilia*, do so, and if his Lordship's Account is satisfactory, I may, possibly, lend a more favourable Attention to your farther Proposals. Madam, said *Tom*, I most humbly thank you for condescending to accept of such Satisfaction as is in my Power to give; and I am so secure in my Lord's Friendship, that I have not the least Doubt but he will oblige me in such a Manner as will remove every Difficulty, every Rub that obstructs

fructs my Way to the Possession of my Heaven of Happiness, the Circle of your Arms; of which, dear Angel, give me Leave to take a little Foretaste on those balmy Lips, sweeter than Nectar and Ambrosia. *Emilia* shew'd no Reluctance, but suffer'd him to kiss her with all the Complacency imaginable.

All Differences and Disputes being now pretty well adjusted, they quitted their Bower, and returned to the House. *Tom* was infinitely pleas'd with the happy Progress that he had made in his Amour; and now sets his Wits to Work to finish what he had so successfully begun. His next Business is to counterfeit the Writing of my Lord *Forage*, certifying his Lordship's Knowledge of what *Tom* had a Mind to say of himself. *Tom* judg'd it not proper to trust any Person with the Secret for Fear of a Discovery; but being perfect Master of his Pen, could vary his Hand, or even counterfeit another's to such Perfection, that the Difference was scarce discernible. *Tom* was well acquainted with his Lordship's Manner of Writing and the peculiar Cut of his Letters; and so sets himself to Work to imitate him with as much Exactness as he

could. After hammering his Invention for a good while, at last he gives this extraordinary Account of himself, in the counterfeited Hand of Lord *Forage*.

‘ **CHARLES CHAMONT**, Esq;
 ‘ my most worthy Friend and Kins-
 ‘ man, having desired me to give him
 ‘ such a Character as he really deserves;
 ‘ I therefore, in respect to the antient
 ‘ Friendship and Intimacy which have
 ‘ always subsisted between our Families,
 ‘ as well as in Regard to his own per-
 ‘ sonal Merits, declare, upon my Honour,
 ‘ that I know him to be a most accom-
 ‘ plish’d Gentleman, who inherits the
 ‘ Virtues of his Ancestors, and who can
 ‘ dignify the highest Station to which
 ‘ his Prince or Country can raise him.
 ‘ At present I believe he is not possess’d
 ‘ of above 5000 *l.* a Year; but am well
 ‘ assur’d that upon the Death of his Fa-
 ‘ ther, and some rich Relations, he will
 ‘ be worth more than five Times that
 ‘ Sum. As he did not acquaint me with
 ‘ the Motives which induc’d him to re-
 ‘ quest this Favour of me, so neither did
 ‘ I ask him, being perfectly assured that
 ‘ whatever Use he shall make of it, he
 ‘ will

‘ will act nothing but what is consistent
 ‘ with the most scrupulous Honour, and
 ‘ becoming a Gentleman of the politest
 ‘ Education.’

F O R A G E.

Tom was mightily pleas'd with the happy Manner in which he thought he had express'd himself; and as it was not requisite that the Paper should be seal'd, he had no Occasion to puzzle himself for a Coat of Arms for it.

The next Thing he had to do was, to ask *Emilia's* Leave to go and pay his Respects to his noble Friend Lord *Forage*, for the Purpose which she knew; and which she readily granted; and, to blind her Mother, order'd him to call on Lady *Howdee*, to know how her Ladyship did, and whether she was recover'd of the Cold she had taken last Sunday at Church. *Tom* went accordingly, but with no Design to see his Lordship, but with another *View*, as shall be presently explained.

Fortune had wonderfully favour'd *Tom's* Project hitherto, even beyond his most sanguine Hopes. Yet still there was one Thing remain'd to be done,

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without

without which all his Labour and Pains hitherto, wou'd be absolutely vain and fruitless; that was, in Case *Emilia* shou'd approve the Character which Lord *Forage* (or rather himself in his Lordship's Name) would give of him; the next Thing would be, to appoint the Time and Place of Marriage, which he design'd shou'd be solemniz'd in the most private and clandestine Manner possible. To manage this so as to create no Suspicion, nor give any Alarm to the Family, requir'd another Cast of his Art. To this End he goes to his Lordship's Seat, which was but three Miles off, and find out his old Friend and Acquaintance *Will Pimpwell*, who had succeeded him as Footman to his Lordship. *Will* said he, I know you are a Fellow of excellent Capacity in conducting an Affair of Love. Know then, that I am going to be married to a Lady of a great Fortune, and a perfect Beauty. By what Means I have been able to accomplish so delicate an Affair, does not concern you to know at present. We are to be married out of Hand, but in such a clandestine Manner, that her Friends may still remain ignorant of it. Now the

Favour

Favour I have to ask of you is, to assist me in this last Act of my Play, in a Character which I am pretty sure you are a perfect Stranger to, I mean that of a Clergyman. You must personate the Parson, and likewise find out some little private House where it may be done without the Notice of any Body. This if you will do, I promise you a handsome Reward, besides a Kiss of my Mistress. *Will*, who was as wicked a Rogue as himself, readily gave him his Word, that he would do all in his Power to serve so good a Friend, especially on so important an Occasion; and for the Purpose, said he, I can easily procure the Chaplain's Canonicals. Thus the fair, innocent, virtuous *Emilia* was to be made a Sacrifice to the Lust of an abandon'd Villain, assisted by an Accomplice, as thoroughly qualified as himself, for any atrocious Attempt of the same Kind.

Tom having concerted the Measures to be taken for the Success of his wicked Enterprize, returns to *Emilia*, and tells her, that he had waited on my Lord *Forage*, who had received him with great Civility and Affection; had given him such a Testimonial of his Friendship as

he was much obliged to him for. Then taking the Paper out of his Pocket, wrote by himself, presented it to her. *Emilia* read it very attentively once again; and not doubting but it was penn'd by his Lordship, said, that she could have nothing to object to so plain an Evidence of his sincere Professions; but thought she ought to be a little better acquainted with his Merit, before she resign'd herself wholly into his Power. Besides, said she, if you have such a large Estate as his Lordship here intimates, you ought to jointure me in a Settlement, and make a Provision for my Children, that they may have something to trust to in Case of Accidents. This was a Rub thrown in his Way that *Tom* did not expect; however, nothing could boggle his Impudence, and therefore with an unblushing Front he returned her this Answer. Madam, said he, I acknowledge what you have said is just and right; you ought to have such a Jointure settled upon you as you mention. I have thought of it already, and have pitch'd upon a Farm of mine, a little Freehold Estate, which is now rented at 200 l. a Year. This I have resolv'd to settle on you and your Heirs for ever,

ever, and have already writ to my Lawyer to prepare the Writings against our coming, and I doubt not will be ready to be executed the Moment we arrive at my Mansion-house. And you may trust my Honour that I will deal as sincerely with you in this as in all other Respects. I beg of you therefore dear Lady, to lay aside your Scruples of all Kinds, and permit me to appoint the Time of compleating my Happiness by the Junction of our Hands in holy Matrimony. To which purpose I have spoke to my Lord's Chaplain, who will perform the Ceremony in the most private Manner we can desire.

Emilia having nothing farther to object, told him he might do as he pleas'd; only to be careful to manage the Affair with such Secrecy, that no Creature might have the least Notice of it.

Every Thing being adjusted to their mutual Satisfaction, *Tom* was wonderfully elated with his good Fortune; and soon finds an Excuse to go again to his Friend *Will Pimpwell*, to consult with him the Method of putting his projected Scheme in Execution. And thus these Rogues agreed; *Will*, that he would
consult

consult with old Mother *Colin*, the Shepherd's Wife, and instruct her how to put her little Cottage in Order, and for what Intent ; and likewise to provide himself with the Chaplain's Robes and an old Marriage License, several of which lay loose in the Window of the Doctor's Study ; and he knew how to alter the Dates and Names, so as to adapt it to the present Purpose. As to *Tom*, he had nothing to do, but to go home and acquaint *Emilia*, that on Saturday-Evening next my Lord's Chaplain would be ready to tie the nuptial Knot between them, and so complete their Happiness by an everlasting Union of their Souls and Bodies.

Emilia wou'd fain have put it off to a longer Day ; for she had a strange Foreboding in her Mind that all was not right ; and that the private and clandestine Manner in which she had agreed to solemnize her Marriage, would be attended with no good Consequences. But *Tom* wou'd not give her Time to think, but urg'd her to get all things in Readiness against the Time, and to think of some Excuse to her Mother as a Reason for her Absence ; and then changing the Subject of his Discourse, talked much of the

the Grandeur that he should speedily advance her to; his Coach and Chariot, his fine Flanders Mares, his gay Liveries and magnificent Equipages. Things which too frequently captivate a Woman's Heart, to the Ruin of her Happiness, and sometimes of her Virtue.

Saturday being come, *Emilia* acquaints her Mother, that as it was pleasant Weather, she intended in the Evening to take a little Ride of two or three Miles and so home again. Her Mother having no Suspicion of the Intrigue that was carrying on, but thinking that a little Exercise would be for her Daughter's Health, bid her only be careful of herself, and take *Tom* with her for a Guard. Accordingly at the Hour appointed, *Tom* is order'd to get *Emilia's* Pad ready, and a Horse for himself; and being both mounted they rode directly to old *Colin's*, who liv'd in a little Hutt on the Side of a Common, contiguous to a Wood, at least, a Mile's Distance from any House or Neighbour whatsoever.

Being arriv'd and alighted, *Tom* put the Horses in an old Hovel out of Sight; and going into the Hutt, they found there

there ready to receive them, *Will* dress'd in a Parson's Habit, and old *Colin* and his Wife, who had been inform'd of what was to be transacted, but not of the Persons who were to be married. *Will* addresses himself to his Office, and with great Gravity first demands the Licence, which *Tom* instantly gives him, and having perus'd it, proceeds to perform the nuptial Ceremony, which he went thro' without Hesitation.

All being over, and *Tom* having gratified the Parson, and likewise the two old Folks, to their Content, mounts his Horse, and with his Bride returns home. *Emilia*, tho' it was her wedding Day, could not be merry for the Life of her, and notwithstanding all her Endeavours to raise and chear up her Spirits, yet found a kind of Melancholy hanging about Heart, which she could by no Means dissipate. *Tom*, on the contrary, was exceeding joyous and frolicksome, and insisted on Consummation that very Night. *Emilia*, tho' she wou'd willingly have wav'd that Part a little longer, yet believing it to be her Duty to pay absolute Obedience to her Husband's Commands, consented, that when the Family

ly

ly were in Bed, he might come to her Chamber. *Tom* was punctual to the Time, and found an easy Admission, and soon rifled that inestimable Treasure of Charms, which never before had been opened, or profaned by the Hand of Man.

Tom was now arrived to the very Pinnacle of all his Glory, and greatly applauded his good Genius, that enabled him to surmount such uncommon Difficulties as he had had to encounter. He had got Possession of the only Paradise he had any Notion of, where he wanton'd at Will in all the Delights of the Place; never once troubling himself about his former Engagements to carry *Emilia* to his Land of Promise in *Northumberland*, of which he had given her so fine a Description.

Several Weeks having past and no Notice taken on *Tom's* Part, of what, before Marriage, he had so solemnly vow'd and protested, *Emilia* was not a little uneasy at his dilatory Proceedings; and therefore took the Liberty to ask him, when he intended to take her away to his Seat: for she thought his present Station too low and unworthy of a Gentleman of

such a plentiful Fortune, as he had assured her he was. *Tom* expected such an Application, and therefore had his Answer in Readiness: That his Horses had been all this while in my Lord *Forage's* Stables, where, by standing so long without Exercise, they had contracted a Lameness, which it would require some Time to cure them of, but a Farrier had undertook to perform it as speedily as possible. *Emilia* was satisfied for the present; but in a little Time after, perceiving an unusual Alteration in herself, and the common Symptoms of Pregnancy, she acquainted her Husband with her Apprehensions, and desired him to hasten his Departure, or take such Measures as the Emergency of the Case required.

Tom seemed to make light of this Piece of News, and told her she might depend upon his utmost Care in every Thing that related to her Peace and Quiet. *Tom*, however, upon a private Consultation with his own Thoughts, easily perceived, that his Stay in that Family must be very short, or he should soon be call'd to a very strict Account for all his Roguery; and undergo such Purgations as would ill suit his Constitution; and therefore

resolves

resolves to try his Fortune somewhere else. But being unwilling to go away quite empty-handed, he tells *Emilia*, that being determined immediately to undertake his intended Journey, he desired her to be Ready in two or three Days; that being a little out of Cash, he desired her to give him what Money she could spare, because he must buy some Necessaries he had occasion for. *Emilia*, glad that he had at last resolved to take the Journey he had so long promised, gave him every Shilling she had in the World; which, tho' no great Sum, yet serv'd *Tom* well enough for his present Purpose; for the next Morning early he went clear off, with a firm Resolution never to come there any more; and was so unmannerly as to take Leave of Nobody. Whither he went next, what he did afterwards, and what Reward his Roguery met with in the End, we shall have Occasion hereafter to relate in the Course of the Story. Let us now return to *Emilia*, whom we left employ'd in preparing for her Journey into *Northumberland*.

But this Journey she must never undertake; for Providence had designed to

punish her very severely for her too easy Credulity in resigning herself to the Power of such a profligate Fellow on no better Security than his own Veracity. *Tom* had not been gone many Days before *Sophronia* observed a strange Alteration both in the Health and Temper of her Daughter. *Emilia* was naturally of a gay and chearful Disposition, which was now clouded with Melancholy, and her Mother often catch'd her in Tears, which in vain she endeavour'd to conceal; and her Health as well as her Complexion, were visibly chang'd. These Circumstances rais'd in *Sophronia* Suspicions, that there must be a more than ordinary Cause for such a sudden Alteration; which, together with the Flight of her Footman, gave her but too great Reasons to believe, that that Fellow had ruin'd her Daughter. But to be entirely satisfied of the Truth, she calls *Emilia* into her Closet, that from her own Mouth she might learn what Grounds she had for her Surmizes. *Emilia*, said she, what is the Meaning of that Gloominess which I have observ'd to sit so heavily upon you of late? Those Sighs and Tears which seem involuntarily to steal from you? Why do
you

you seek Retirement, and so much absent yourself, as of late you have done, from my Presence? Is my Company become a Trouble to you, Child? Or have I done any Thing to disoblige you? Tell me sincerely, and hide not from me the Cause of your apparent Disquietude. For be assured, so long as I see you uneasy, I can have no Rest.

Emilia was extremely affected with her Mother's Discourse; and a Flood of Tears gushing from her Eyes, she broke out into such kind of Exclamations as these. Ah! miserable me, which Way shall I turn myself? From whom can I expect Relief or Compassion in this my deplorable Condition? Heaven I have offended, and therefore have no Reason to hope for its Grace or Favour. My most dear and indulgent Parents I have offended by acting counter to that Allegiance and Duty which is their Right by Nature, as well as by the Laws of God and Man. I have offended all good Men by relinquishing the Paths of Honour and Virtue, in which I have been happily train'd up from my Infancy. I am utterly undone; but my Ruin is of my own seeking. As I took Folly for my Counsellor,

Counsellor, Wretchedness is deservedly my Portion. O what a dreadful Prospect presents itself to my View! The Anger of Heaven, the just Resentment of my Parents, the Scorn of my Friends, and the Terrors of my own guilty Conscience, are all drawn up in horrid Array before me, and from which it is as impossible to fly, as it is to cease to be. Ye Mountains overwhelm me with your Weight! or thou Earth open thy capacious Womb, and ingulph me in the Centre of thy Bowels, for I am no longer worthy to tread on thy Surface, or to herd with the meanest of those Creatures that daily subsist on thy Bounty. How shall I be able to stand up against the Violence of my Father's Rage, who perhaps will cut me off as he wou'd do a rotten and superfluous Branch from a Tree, or an unsightly and troublesome Wen in his Flesh. I know it's as improbable to hope for Forgiveness from him, as it's impossible for me to forgive myself: This Way only have I left, to extricate myself out of these Miseries, that is, by putting a sudden End to this wretched Being, before my Sorrows are multiplied.

multiplied beyond my Ability to bear them.

Sophronia was exceedingly moved with *Emilia's* Distress, and not suffering her to go on in her piteous Cries and Ejaculations, interrupted her here: My dear Child, said she, I am infinitely astonish'd with your present Behaviour. What have you done? What sad Crime have you been guilty of that should occasion such severe Reflections on yourself? Or shall I spare you the Shame of repeating it, and tell you my own Suspicions, that you have committed Folly with *Tom* the Footman?

O Madam! says *Emilia*; you have touch'd me to the very Soul. To confess my Guilt will be a fresh Renewal of my Sorrows and my Shame; and to deny it will be to no Purpose, since in vain shall I endeavour to hide that which a little Time must necessarily discover. Let me then crave so much Indulgence from you as to hear my Story with Patience, and then judge whether I have not Reason to afflict myself, and even to seek a Refuge in the Grave from the Evils which I have brought upon me,

as well as on you my most dear and tender Parents.

Emilia then proceeded to recount to her Mother every Thing that had past betwixt *Tom* and her, especially the Manner of his deluding her into a Persuasion, that he was a Gentleman of Fortune; of his pretended Friendship and Intimacy with Lord *Forage*; how he had inveighed her to a clandestine Marriage, and that her informing him of her Pregnancy was the Occasion, as she was now but too well convinc'd, of his sudden and precipitate Flight; with every other particular as has been before related. And now Madam, added she, I appeal to you whether I have not all the Reason in the World to torment myself, nay to curse my Indiscretion and wilful Obstinacy, for taking no better a Director, for my Guide, in a Matter of such Importance than my own weak and silly Judgment? O! Why did I not consult with you and other Friends, who have Experience and Understanding, who know the Tricks and Deceit of Mankind too well to be impos'd upon? Ah! why indeed? but that the supreme Disposer of all Things, seeing how much I trusted to my own Strength

Strength, was pleas'd to convince me by a woeful Proof, of my own Weakness and Insufficiency.

Sophronia was greatly troubled and perplex'd upon hearing her Daughter's Relation of her strange and sad Adventures. To reproach her for her Misconduct, she thought would be adding Weight to the Burden with which she saw her already too much oppress'd, and how to advise her, she was for the present much at a Loss. For she knew the Violence of *Horatio's* Temper so well, that she dreaded the Consequence of acquainting him with this disastrous Affair. But yet know it he must sooner or later; and therefore she must take her Opportunity, when she saw him in one of his best Humours, to break it to him. But perceiving that *Emilia* stood more in need of Consolation than Chastisement, rightly judg'd that Lenitives were more proper for her Case than Corrosives; and therefore made her this gentle Reply. Daughter, said she, that I am greatly troubled for your Misfortune, you will easily believe; however, I would not have you think your Condition so desperate, as to be utterly past Relief, tho'

in some Respects past a Remedy. You are not the first young Lady that has been robb'd of her Honour thro' the deceitful Wiles and Perjuries of Men. Numberless are the Instances that might be produc'd to confirm what I say. And I doubt not but such prudent Measures may be taken as to heal this Wound in your Reputation, at least so far as to keep it from the Knowledge of the World. However, let it be your Care, at least for the present, to keep the Secret safe in your own Breast, nor give Room, by any ill-tim'd Excesses in your Words or Actions, to the Tongue of Slander to insinuate your Consciousness of Guilt. The greatest Difficulty will be to moderate your Father's Passion, when I shall tell him of your Misfortune. But you may rest satisfied in this, that I will do all in my Power to prevail on him to join with me in such Measures as shall be suitable to the present Emergency. Therefore dry up your Eyes, and calm the Storm that makes such Havock in your Soul. I doubt not, but before I sleep, I shall be able to bring you News of your Father's kind
and

and paternal Regard for the Peace and Welfare of his darling Daughter.

Emilia thank'd her for her undeserved Goodness; wish'd, but doubted her Success, her Mind foreboding greater Ills than she had yet felt; that however she was determin'd to resign herself to the Will of Heaven, and never to murmur or repine at her Sufferings, how severe soever they were, since she had justly deserv'd the worst that could befall her.

Sophronia commended her Resolution, and went immediately to seek out *Horatio*; whom she found alone in the Garden. After some prefatory Discourse about indifferent Things; *Horatio*, said she, I have an Affair to acquaint you with, which concerns you very nearly to know, yet it is of such a Nature that I am not at Liberty to tell it you, unless you will first promise, that when you have heard it, you will not break out into an Excess of Passion, but rather hearken to such Advice as Prudence and Moderation shall direct. Very well, says he; so, my Dear, I must subscribe to your Terms of Peace, when perhaps I shall have Reason to declare War with all my Forces. This is something like

French Policy; however, as the Enemy has employed such a powerful Mediat-
rix as *Sophronia*, I agree to the Preliminaries, but expect that you will deal fairly and ingenuously, and not shew any Partiality in the Cause you have undertaken. Agreed, says *Sophronia*; and now arm yourself with Patience, and hear me without Interruption, while I relate to you a Misfortune that has beset our Family, which I am sensible will very greatly affect you. With this Preface she introduces the whole Transaction between his Daughter *Emilia* and the Footman; her present Condition; and the Trouble and Anguish of Soul she was in for her Folly, and the Disgrace she had brought upon herself and Family; but withal observ'd, that she was so terrified at the Apprehensions of his Resentment, that it was with much ado she had dissuaded her from laying violent Hands upon herself. In short, that her Affliction was so very great, and her Lamentations so piercing, that she had more need of Comfort and Advice, than any harsh Dealings for her unhappy Miscarriage.

Horatio, before he had heard half her
Story

Story thro', began to redden, his Breast heav'd with the Passion that was gathering in it, and such Fury appear'd in his Looks, as seem'd to threaten Ruin and Destruction to all about him; however he smother'd his Anger as well as he could till *Sophronia* had done; and then bid her leave him for a short Space, that he might consider what Course he should take on this extraordinary Occasion.

Sophronia retir'd; when no longer able to contain his Passion, he gave it Vent in such Exclamations as these! Good God! Why is this Perversion in the Order of Nature? Why are Children, which in the sacred Oracles of Truth are called Blessings, given me as as a Curse? Is it not enough for us to bear the wayward and perverse Humours of their Childhood, the Care of their Education, the perpetual Fatigue of guarding them against Evils and Errors of every Sort, till they arrive at Years of Maturity; but that, when they come to such a Stage of Life, when Sense and Discretion should take Place, and Reason be their Guide, we must have the Mortification to see all our Cares and Pains frustrated, and our Hopes disappointed,
by

by Rashness, by Folly, by the Prevalence of some irregular Appetite, which in an Instant will undo and destroy a Work that, perhaps, we have been twenty Years labouring to perfect? How much happier is the State of the Beasts of the Field, the Birds of the Air, and the Fish of the Sea? They breed up their Young, but feed them no longer than they are able to provide for themselves; then turn them adrift, and leave them to the Charge of Providence. But how hard is the Fate of Man, who gets Children to multiply Sorrows for his old Age? But why do I weary myself with Reflections of this Kind? Resolution and Firmness become me better than unavailing Exclamations. I remember it was said of King *Philip IVth of Spain*, that when his Son, who had been guilty of some great Offence by which he had forfeited his Life, petition'd his Father for Pardon, and as a Motive to prevail on him to extend his Mercy to him, said, that he was his Majesty's own Flesh and Blood; the King answer'd with a Frown, *When my Blood is corrupted I give my Arm to the Surgeon*; and immediately order'd him for Execution. This was
 acting

acting as became the Dignity both of a
 Sovereign and of a Man. For the Weak-
 ness of Nature should never prevail
 against the Demands of Justice; since,
 if that was allowed, the Laws would
 soon lose their Force, and our Courts of
 Justice be quickly silent. But now,
 what must I do in the present Case? My
 Girl, whom I nurtur'd up with all my
 Care, and lov'd with the utmost Ten-
 derness, has been guilty of a most atro-
 cious Offence. Shall I, for this, turn
 her out of Doors, and give her up to
 Want and Infamy? Or must I still keep
 her, to be the living Monument of her
 own Shame, and the constant Disgrace
 of my Family? Is there no middle Way
 between these two Extremes? Let me
 consider ——— After a Turn or two —
 Now I think I have it, and my Reso-
 lution is fix'd. Then calls *Sophronia*,
 who was in another Part of the Garden,
 very anxiously waiting for the Issue.
Sophronia, said he, I promis'd to keep
 my Passion within Bounds, and I have
 been as good as my Word. I have with
 the maturest Deliberation weigh'd and
 considered the Case you have told me;
 and this is my unalterable Resolution,
 That

That To-morrow Morning early, I will take *Emilia* in the Coach with me, and convey her to a Place of Retirement about twenty Miles off; where she must remain till Time has worn out the Memory of her scandalous Actions. Thus have I determin'd; and it is in vain to solicit me to alter my fix'd Purpose. Ask me not where she is to go; for that must be a Secret till I think it consistent with my Honour to fetch her home again.

Sophronia knew it was to no Purpose to expostulate with him the Unreasonableness of carrying her Daughter she knew not where, and among People to whom she was an utter Stranger; and therefore acquiesc'd in his Sentence; and only said, That he hop'd she consider'd that *Emilia* was his own Child, and that he would not increase her Sufferings by any farther Hardships, which might drive her to Despair, and occasion her to hasten her own Death. Woman, said *Horatio* hastily, I'll hear no more — you know my Mind — I will be obey'd.

This resolute and positive Answer silenc'd *Sophronia*; and she immediately left

left him, and returning to *Emilia*, gave her an Account of the Success she had met with, and of the Resolution her Father had come to. *Emilia* sigh'd, and said she was ready to go wherever her Father thought fit to carry or send her, were it even to the remotest Parts of the Earth; for then, said she, I shall never hear the Reproaches which Scandal will be sure to load me with, and shall be covered by my Obscurity from the base Designs and Treacheries of Man.

The next Morning early, *Sophronia* took Leave of her Daughter with abundance of Tears and passionate Expressions, which *Emilia* return'd with equal Love and Tenderneſs; and declar'd, that, with respect to herself, she was perfectly easy, and entirely submitted to her Father's Pleasure, not doubting but she was still the Care of Providence, which, she verily believed, would one Day or other vindicate her Innocence, and punish the Villain who had been the wicked Instrument of her present Calamities.

The Coach being ready, *Emilia* was called upon to take her Place in it; and being seated, *Horatio* went in likewise; and

and calling the Coachman to the Door, bid him take the *London* Road. When they had travell'd about twenty Miles, and were got into the Middle of a Wood, thro' which the Road lay, he orders the Coach to stop. Then taking *Emilia* out of the Coach, walk'd with her about an hundred Yards into the Depth of the Wood, but not out of Sight of the Road, and there he stops; and then turning himself to *Emilia* (for he had not chang'd a Word with her since they came out before) he thus spoke to her: ' *Emilia*, I shall not now
 ' upbraid you with the Disgrace which
 ' you have brought upon yourself and
 ' me — let your Crime be your Punish-
 ' ment — But this is my Will, that you
 ' never more own me for your Father,
 ' as I shall disclaim you for ever for my
 ' Daughter. Take your Fortune where
 ' you can find it; but no more call my
 ' House your Home, nor be seen nearer
 ' to it than you now are upon the Peril
 ' of your Life!' Having so said, he gave her a Purse of Guineas, returned to his Coach, and ordered the Coachman to turn his Horses, and drive back again.

Emilia was so astonish'd at these
 Words

Words of her Father, that she stood like one thunder-struck. His monstrous Cruelty in cutting her off from his Family and Blood; her present forlorn Situation, in being left to try, unexperienc'd as she was, the Adversities of Life, and all the Evils she had to expect from an ill-natur'd, envious, and pitiless World, without a Friend to advise or assist, a Parent to help and comfort her, or a Husband to protect and guard her in the Troubles and Afflictions which she saw crouding in upon her from every Quarter; and the dismal Prospect of a thousand Evils yet to come, wrought such a Distraction in her Soul, that it was a good while before she could compose her Mind sedately to consider what she had best to do in this strange Emergency. At last she sat herself down at the Foot of a Tree, that she might at Leisure deliberate on this wonderful Incident of her Life, and what Course she had best to steer to avoid those Rocks and Shelves with which Fortune threaten'd to obstruct her Way. After a long Consultation with her own Thoughts, she at last resolves to make the best of her Way to *London*, and to trust to Providence

vidence for the Disposal of her afterwards. Her Mind being a little better compos'd than it was, she looks at the Purse which her Father had put in her Hand when he left her; and turning out the Money, told over an Hundred Guineas. The Sight of which gave her new Life and Spirits, and seem'd a propitious Omen that there was still some Happiness in Store for her. In this Persuasion she cheers up herself, and goes directly to the Place where she parted from the Coach, and leaving the Road in which she came, takes to that which led for *London*. This she follow'd till she came to a large Town where the Coaches and Waggon's stop'd that were going to that City. She lodg'd at one of the Inns, and agreed for a Place in a Coach, which brought her the next Day to an Inn in the *Strand*. Here again she was at a Loss what to do, and where to bestow herself. After she had thought a little upon the Matter, she goes to the Mistress of the Inn, and tells her, That she was come to Town on Business, which would require her Stay here for some Time; but being an utter Stranger, would be glad if she would recommend

recommend her to a Lodging in some sober Family. The Landlady perceiving by the Innocence of her Looks and her unaffected Behaviour, that she should run no Hazard in obliging her Guest, told her she believ'd she could; and immediately sent for a Gentlewoman in the Neighbourhood, who rented a large House on purpose to let it out in Lodgings, by which she maintain'd herself. Mrs. *Friendly* (for that was her Name) being come, a Bargain was soon struck, and *Emilia* went home with her directly, and took Possession of her Room.

Emilia was mightily pleas'd with her new Situation; and was more so when, upon examining the Contents of a small Bundle which her Mother had given her at parting, she found a Parcel of Child-bed Linnen folded together, and in the Middle of that a Purse of fifty Guineas. This Money, with what she had before receiv'd from her Father, wou'd, she thought, with good OEconomy, keep her a good while from wanting at least the Necessaries of Life. However, being unwilling, as little as possible, to diminish the main Stock, she desired Mrs. *Friendly* to procure her some plain
Work

Work; for having a great deal of Time upon her Hands, she should be glad of something to keep her out of Idleness.

- Mrs. *Friendly* having observ'd her sober and discreet Behaviour, had taken a great Liking to her, and soon got her Work enough to employ all her Time.

Several Months *Emilia* amus'd herself in this Manner; and sometimes with reading such Books as Mrs. *Friendly* could lend her, and sometimes by sending out the Maid to buy such Packets of extraordinary Occurrences that were baul'd about the Streets. It happen'd one Day, that hearing a Hawker roaring out as if he would burst his Lungs, an Account of the Last Dying Words and Confession of the Malefactors that were lately executed at *Tyburn*, she had a Mind to gratify her Curiosity in reading their Cases; and to her infinite Surprise and Astonishment, the first Name she cast her Eye upon, was *Thomas Sharply*, who was condemn'd and executed for a Robbery on the Highway. Upon reading farther, she observ'd, that he confess'd his Crime, and the Justice of his Sentence; that he had formerly been a Footman to Lord *Forage*, and being

being turn'd away, had hired himself to *Horatio*, where, pretending himself a Gentleman in Disguise, he had (by the Help of another Footman in a canonical Habit) married his Daughter and got her with Child, and for fear of a Discovery, quitted his Service, and not being able to get another, took to the Highway, which had deservedly brought him to this miserable and shameful End.

Having read his Confession thro', she was fully convinc'd, that the suffering Criminal was the very identical Betrayer of her Innocence, who with false Pretences had impos'd on her Understanding, deluded her from her Duty, and by his treacherous Insinuations, like the Tempter of old, had seduc'd her from her Virtue, whereby she had forfeited and lost the Paradise of her Parents Love, and that Felicity which is the constant Attendant on conscious Innocence, and plung'd her into a Sea of Miseries. The more she thought on these Things, the greater Reason she saw for Thankfulness to that kind Providence which had so signally appear'd in her Favour, and had by such a notable

ble

ble Stroke of its Justice, punish'd him who had designedly done her such irreparable Injuries.

But now the Time drew near when Nature requir'd to be exonerated of the Burden which had been almost nine Months in growing to Maturity. *Emilia* had hitherto managed the Matter so artfully, that no body, not even her Landlady had the least Suspicion of her being with Child; and if she could still keep 'em in Ignorance of her Condition, she should think herself very fortunate. To this End she speaks to Mrs. *Friendly* after this Manner. Madam, an Affair has happen'd which obliges me to go into the Country for about a Month. I beg the Favour of you not to lett my Room in that Time, when you may certainly expect my Return; however, that you may suffer no Loss, I will pay you for the Month before I go. But Mrs. *Friendly* was so well satisfied of *Emilia's* Honour. that she would have refus'd it, but being press'd she took it, and assur'd her that her Lodging should be ready for her whenever she return'd.

Emilia having thus resolv'd, the next Morning packs up her few Effects in a
small

small Bundle, takes a Walk into the Country, not knowing nor caring whither she went; when she was tired, she sat down at some Publican's Door, and refresh'd herself with a little Ale, and then travell'd on again, till she came to a little House on the Back-side of a Village. At the Door of it sat the good Woman mending some old Linnen, and two or three small Children playing about her, all very neat and clean, tho' in a homely Dress. This, thought *Emilia*, is the Woman I have been seeking for. Good Woman, said she, will you give me Leave to sit down and rest myself, for I am really weary. With all my Heart, said she. When *Emilia* had sat a-while, My good Friend, said she again, I thank you for this Favour; but I have yet another to entreat of you. I perceive you are a Mother of Children, and consequently must know what Sort of Usage is proper for a Woman that lies in. I am, as you may see, very big, and I believe within a few Days of my Time; but am so far from my own Home that it is impossible to reach it before I expect my Travail to come on. The Favour then that I have to ask of

you is, that you will be so good as to let me lye-in at your House, and that your-
 self will be my Nurse, for which I will
 satisfy you to your Content. Alack,
 says the Woman, we are poor Folks,
 and my Husband goes to Hedging and
 Ditching, and we have no Room nor
 Conveniencies for a Gentlewoman of
 your Fashion. Besides, if by entertain-
 ing you I should bring any Charge-upon
 the Parish, our Justices would punish us,
 and perhaps send us both to Bridewell.
 Fear not, said *Emilia*, supposing the
 worst that can happen, that is, my
 Death, you shall see I am able to save you
 harmlets from any Losses you can pos-
 sibly sustain by such an Accident; and
 if I live, that it is in my Power to re-
 ward your Civilities to your utmost
 Wish; at the same Time pulling out a
 Handful of Guineas, shew'd them to her.
 The Sight of which soon prevailed on
 the poor Woman to comply with *Emilia's*
 Request; and she reply'd, that since she
 was pleas'd to take up with such mean
 Accommodations as her House could
 afford, she would do her best to serve
 her in those Respects which were proper
 for

for a Gentlewoman in her Condition; and so bid her Welcome.

In less than a Week's Time *Emilia* was brought to Bed of a dead Child. This however gave her but little Uneasiness; nay, she reckon'd it as another Instance of the Divine Favour, in taking that away, which, otherwise, might have been a Mark of her Folly and Infamy as long as she liv'd. The Woman took all imaginable Care of her during the whole Time of her Lying-in; by which Means, at the End of the Month, she was perfectly recovered, her youthful Bloom and Vigour return'd, and all the Charms of her former Beauty appear'd in their full Lustre.

Emilia being now freed from her Incumbrance, and finding herself in perfect Health, began to think of returning to her Lodgings in the *Strand*. Calling therefore her kind Hostess to her, she thus bespeaks her. My dear Nurse, said she, next to the Goodness of Heaven, I am to return my sincerest Thanks to you for the infinite Care and Indulgence that I have found at your Hands ever since you was so kind to take me under your Protection. It

now remains that I satisfy you for your Trouble; tell me what it is you require? Madam, says the Woman, I shall leave that wholly to your own Generosity. Well then, says *Emilia*, there's ten Guineas for you; and if that's not enough, speak, and you shall have what will content you. Dear Madam, says the Woman, it is a great deal more than I expected, or indeed deserv'd for the small Trouble I have had in nursing you. I have been at no Expence, because you paid for every Thing you wanted, and besides, maintain'd my Family ever since you have been here. Pray God in Heaven bless you, and give you your Heart's Desire, and may your Goodness and Charity to us be rewarded with the greatest Happiness both in this World and the next.

I thank you, said *Emilia*, for your good Wishes, and am very well pleased that you are so. But now I must leave you, and return to *London* from whence I came; but must beg the Favour of your Husband to bear me Company, to shew me the nearest Way, otherwise I shall be puzzled to find it, having never been here before. This was easily granted

granted, and the Man waited on her till they came into the *Strand*, where she dismiss'd him giving him a Crown for his Trouble.

Emilia then went to her old Lodging, and was kindly receiv'd by Mrs. *Friendly*. Being once more in Possession of her Chamber, she confined herself closely to it, employing herself at her Needle as she had done before. Mrs. *Friendly* had a Spinnet, which no body using, *Emilia* begg'd the Favour of its being plac'd in her Room; and as she could play upon it admirably well, and had an excellent Voice, by joining the one to the other, she made a delightful Harmony at such Times as she had a Mind to unbend herself from her Work.

It happen'd, that a young Gentleman, whom we shall call *Portius*, lodg'd in the same House. *Portius* had been a Student in one of the Inns of Court, had gone thro' his Course of Studies, and taken the Degree of Barrister; but being possess'd of a handsome hereditary Fortune of his own, did not design to make the Law his Business, otherwise than as a necessary Accomplishment for a Gentleman; and intended very speedily

ily to quit the Town, and retire to his Estate in the Country.

Portius's Chamber was on the same Floor, and adjoining to *Emilia's*; and he had often been most agreeably entertain'd with her Voice and Instrument, but could never have an Opportunity of seeing her Person. One Afternoon in particular, he was even ravish'd to hear her sing the following Song, with Airs on the Spinnet so peculiarly adapted to the Humour of it, that it made a more than ordinary Impression upon him.



A S O N G.

O Why, ye great Powers above,
Is Man so perfidious in Love?
His Oaths are but Wiles;
Decentful his Smiles;
His Vows are at best
A Farce and a Jest,
O where shall I wander from Ruin and
Man?

Th^c

*The Maid unexperienc'd he tries
With specious Pretences and Lies;*

*He'll wheedle and cog,
And sily cologue*

But Woe to the Fair

That lends him an Ear,

O where shall I, &c.

How feeble is Reason at most!

How weak is the Power we boast!

Our Charms he applauds,

And swears by the Gods

We're Angels of Light —

Then bids us Good Night:

O where shall I, &c.

Does Beauty demand a Regard?

Does Virtue deserve a Reward?

How wicked, how vile,

Is the Man that can spoil

The Work that both Love

And Heaven approve?

O where shall I, &c.

*The Jewel which now he esteems;
Possess'd, but a Pebble it seems;*

*The Charmer enjoy'd,
His Passion is cloy'd;
The Angel before,
He values no more:*

O where shall I, &c.

*Ye Nymphs that range over the Plain,
Beware of the amorous Swain;*

*Disguis'd like Jove,
All Shapes he will prove;
Smile, flatter and court,
But Ruin's his Sport:*

*I'll rove and I'll wander — but always
from Man.*

Portius, after this, was very desirous of seeing the Lady who had given him so much Pleasure, but wanted an Excuse to introduce himself into her Company. He therefore applies to Mrs. *Friendly*, and desires to know who the Lady was that lodged in the Chamber next his; that he had a great Mind to have some Conversation with her; but that she liv'd so very recluse, that he could find no Op-

portunity or Pretence of obtaining such a Favour ; and therefore entreated Mrs. *Friendly* to contrive some way of introducing him into her Company. Mrs. *Friendly*, in Answer, said, That the Lady he spoke of, had lodged with her about ten Months ; that she knew nothing of her Family or Circumstances ; that she always kept herself very close and retired ; that Nobody ever came to visit her, neither had she been out of her Doors since she had been there, except once for a Month, when she went into the Country, but where, or for what Purpose, she did not know ; that she appeared so absolutely reserved, that it seemed as if she had fixt a Resolution of debarring herself from all Company whatsoever ; however, to oblige him, she would try of what Temper she was, and he should soon know the Result.

Accordingly the next Morning Mrs. *Friendly* goes to *Emilia's* Apartment, and tells her she was come to breakfast with her. *Emilia* said she was always very glad of her Company, and the more so, as she had Nobody she could so freely converse with as herself. After the first Course of Compliments and Chit-chat

was over, Mrs. *Friendly*, with a little graver, yet courteous Air, began with her in this Manner. Madam, said she, it is a Matter of Admiration with me, that you live so entirely sequester'd from the World, as if you had no Concern in it, or that it had given you such a Disgust, that you are resolv'd never to be reconciled to it. I don't see that you hold any Commerce or Correspondence with any Body; you seem to have abandon'd the Pleasures of Friendship and Acquaintance; and as to such innocent Diversions and Amusements as are suitable to your Age and Sex, I know of none you have, but what you make yourself. I am sure you don't want Wit or Capacity, or any Accomplishment to render you an agreeable Companion. If you say that you have no Friend or Acquaintance in Town, with whom you can be free and sociable; give me Leave to introduce you into Company, which I promise you shall be strictly conformable to the Rules of Honour and Virtue.

Emilia reply'd, that she had indeed made herself a kind of voluntary Recluse in her own Lodgings; and as it
were

were, banish'd herself from Society; but for what Reason she acted so mortifying a Part, was a Secret which she was not then at Liberty to disclose: But, however, she had not taken such an absolute Dislike to the Pleasures of Life or agreeable Conversation, but under proper Restrictions, she might be induc'd to allow herself some Indulgence. I am glad to hear it, says Mrs. *Friendly*; for in my Opinion, you have hitherto led a very melancholy kind of Life; and pray, for the future, let us have a more friendly and sociable Intercourse than we have yet had; to which End it is my Request that you breakfast with me To-morrow Morning. I will, said *Emilia*, but upon this Condition, that if I should see any Reason to withdraw myself, you will not take it as an Offence. This was readily agreed to.

The next Morning, at the usual Hour, Mrs. *Friendly* sent her Servant to let *Emilia* know that Breakfast was ready. She came down accordingly; but had scarce seated herself before *Portius* (as it had been concerted between Mrs. *Friendly* and him) hearing her go down Stairs followed her and came into the

Room, as it were by Accident, being dress'd only in his Night-gown and Slippers. *Emilia* seeing him enter, immediately fancied that some Plot was laid to her Prejudice, and was getting up to be gone. But Mrs. *Friendly* would by no Means suffer her to stir, saying, that she would strictly keep the Agreement they had Yesterday made, and hop'd that she would not be the first to break it. Madam, says *Portius*, I am persuaded you will have the Goodness to forgive this Intrusion of a Stranger into your Company, when you know that I often take the Freedom of such familiar Visits to Mrs. *Friendly*, to chat away an Hour or two, when more serious Affairs do not require my Presence elsewhere. And, methinks, Conversation is a pleasant Relaxation to the Mind after an intense Engagement either in Business or Study; especially if there be no Design in the Parties conversing together, but purely to amuse and entertain one another with agreeable or profitable Discourse. Sir, said *Emilia*, if I am not mistaken, the Topicks of Conversation, may, for the most Part, be rang'd under three general Heads,
of

of Business, Diversion, and Improvement. The first is manag'd between People in Trade, and such as traffick with Mankind in various Kinds of Dealings and Commodities. As to the second Head, that of Diversion, this happens when Gentlemen meet together over a Bottle, and entertain one another with Flights of Wit, pleasant Humours, Songs, Catches, and other Sorts of Merriment, according to their respective Genius's, exhilarated by the generous Wine they drink. This Kind of Conversation, I apprehend, may be very innocently carried on, so long as the Company conform themselves to Decorum in Action and Decency in Expression; but there is the greatest Reason to believe, if one may give Credit to those who have been Parties at such Entertainments, that it is but seldom that either Decorum or Decency, is, in any Respect, observ'd on these Occasions. You will retort upon me, no Doubt, that the Ladies are guilty of as great Excesses, when they meet together over a Dish of harmless Tea; and that their Conversation generally turns upon the Foibles and Frailties of

some

some of their own Sex. I grant that this is but too often the Case; and therefore they must not expect me for their Advocate in a Cause, which, in Conscience I cannot defend. The third Head of Conversation which I mentioned, was Improvement. By this I understand, a free Communication of such Knowledge as each Member of the Company may have attained in any Part of Literature Art or Science which he proposes, also a dispassionate and candid Discussion of such Points as may be proposed, the Tendency of which is to inform or benefit the Hearers. But how rarely this View is pursued by modern Disputants, I leave you to judge. But, Sir, I ask Pardon for engrossing so much of your Time with my Impertinence; my only Design in throwing out these loose Hints, was to shew how hazardous it is for Innocence and Virtue to mix in the Conversation of our Youth of these Days.

Madam, said *Portius*, I am so far from deeming what you have advanced as impertinent, as you are pleased to misconstrue it, that I have heard you with infinite Delight. You have explained your
Argument

Argument with so much Perspicuity and Conciseness, that you have left me nothing to add more than to expatiate on the Delicacy of your Taste, your happy Elocution, and the Sweetness of your Expression. There was certainly at your Birth a most auspicious Conjunction of the Planets; and *Venus* and *Mercury* united their Powers, and jointly shed their most benign Influence on you, whom they design'd for their Favourite. Thus the one having lent you her Beauty, and the other his Wit, no Wonder you are the *Phoenix* of the Age. But, Madam, you have one Quality, which is entirely your own, and an excellent one it is, for it throws a Lustre on all your other noble Endowments; I mean your Modesty, which I am sensible I should greatly offend should I speak of it in a Manner agreeable to my own Sentiments: Yet pardon me fair Lady, when I say, that your Reservedness is not only an Injury to yourself but to the Publick, which is thereby deprived of one of the brightest Ornaments of the present Age, and the most illustrious Constellation of Graces and Virtues that ever united in the Formation and Embellishment of one
of

of your Sex. You are like a rich Miser, who hides his Jewels and his Gold in his Coffers; and as he is not a Penny the better for the immense Riches in his Possession, so he churlishly deprives Mankind of the Use of that Wealth, which, if put into the common Stock of Trade and Commerce, might be of universal Benefit.

Sir, said *Emilia*, I perceive what Application you are going to make of your fine-spun Doctrine; but take Care you don't deduce wrong Conclusions from Principles not founded on Reason or Fact; and consider, that the finest Structure, built upon a sandy Foundation, will not be of long Duration. You have said a great many fine Things to me, which, perhaps, are no more than a Repetition of the same Compliments you have paid an hundred Times over to others of my Sex. 'Tis true, my Stock of Reason is but small, yet I think I have a Sufficiency to direct me in distinguishing Truth from Falshood, and I assure you, Sir, tho' all the World should join with you in your Encomiums on me, I am so sensible of my own Frailties and Imperfections, that these will always preponderate in the

Scale

Scale of my own Judgment. Flattery is generally the Engine made use of by your Sex in attacking the Fair; and the Reason is, because you know that is our weakest Side. But believe me, it wou'd be a much nobler Token of your Bravery to batter in Front, than endeavour to undermine our Walls by Sapping. I mean, it would be more ingenuous in your Addresses to a Lady, to tell her what she really is, than to persuade her she is of a Species of Beings which have no Existence but in your own Imagination. You must certainly have a very mean Opinion of that Woman's Understanding, who, you imagine, can fancy herself the wonderful Creature your Flattery would make her. — But 'tis Time to have done with such a trifling Subject, as well as for me to retire to my Chamber.

Portius would have waited on her up Stairs, but she positively refus'd that Compliment; however, he would not part with her till he had extorted a Promise from her to oblige him with her Company the next Morning at Breakfast in his Apartment; which she granted

only upon Condition that Mrs. *Friendly* should be there likewise.

Emilia had no sooner took her Leave, but *Portius*, no longer able to restrain the Raptures that fill'd his Soul, gave them Utterance in such Expressions as these. What a charming Creature is this Lady! how modest is her Demeanor! how graceful her Action! how solid her Judgment! how lively her Wit! Beautiful as an Angel, yet chaste as a Vestal! Where can I find such another Woman, so compleatly adorn'd with every Excellence that beautifies her Sex? Shall I neglect so great a Blessing which Providence seems purposely to have thrown in my Way to make me the happiest of Mortals? No, Mrs. *Friendly*, I love her beyond the Power of Expression; and tho' it should happen, that she should not be worth a Groat in the World, yet her Merits are an inestimable Portion, and of infinitely greater Value than the richest Gifts of Fortune. Let me therefore entreat this Favour of you, Madam, that as soon as we are set down to Breakfast To-morrow Morning, you will by your previous Order be called away, and leave the Lady and me together.

gether. This, Mrs. *Friendly* made no Difficulty to promise, adding, that she was well assur'd he should have no Cause to repent her putting such an entire Confidence in his Honour.

Morning being come, Mrs. *Friendly*, at the usual Hour, goes to *Portius's* Room, to see in what Forwardness his Breakfast was, and to put his Tea-Table in proper Decorum. When every Thing was in Readiness, she repairs to *Emilia*, to introduce her to *Portius*, who impatiently waited her coming. *Emilia* would fain have excus'd herself, but Mrs. *Friendly* would have no Denial, and taking her by the Hand, with a Kind of familiar Violence, led her to his Chamber.

Portius, at her Entrance, saluted her with great Respect, and paid his Compliments in such Terms as these. Madam, said he, the Honour of this Visit has compleated my Happiness. When I consider the Smallness of my own Merits, I am surpriz'd at your Condescension; but when I reflect on your natural Candour, Humanity, and Benevolence, my Wonder ceases, and Love succeeds to Admiration. Sir, said *Emilia*, you was

certainly a very happy Man before, since the Addition of so insignificant a Trifle as my Company, has compleated your Felicity. I must confess, indeed, there is too much Easiness in my Temper, or I should not with such Facility have given my Company to a Gentleman whom I have never seen but once before. However, if you would have me believe I am welcome, you will drop your Compliments; for Sincerity is of Sterling Value, but Compliments a mere glittering Tinsel, and current no where but among Knaves and Fools.

Madam, said *Portins*, I am entirely of your Opinion. For Ceremony and fashionable Regards have so usurp'd the Place and Form of true Friendship, that a Friend now a-Days, is not known by his Professions; it is his Actions only that must discover the Sincerity of the Man; yet, give me Leave to say, there is a Civility and Respect due to every Person according to the Rank which he holds in Life. Beauty always challenges our first Regards; and if that is accompanied with Good-nature and Affability, a Man must be of a very morose and brutish Temper, who is not inspir'd with

a more than ordinary Degree of Pleasure and Satisfaction, when entertain'd by a Lady thus happily accomplish'd.

Portius was going on to say all the fine Things that his Wit and this fortunate Occasion could suggest; when he was interrupted by Mrs. *Friendly's* Servant, who acquainted her that a Gentleman below wanted her about Business. Mrs. *Friendly* begg'd their Excuse for leaving them so abruptly, but promis'd to be with them again presently.

Now was the critical Moment come which *Portius* had so earnestly wish'd for. The lovely Object, which had so enchanted his Soul, was before him; and he must now either declare his Passion, or, perhaps, for ever languish in Expectation of such another Opportunity. But, tho' on other Occasions, he did not want Wit, Spirit, or Elocution to express himself to the Purpose, yet now, when he stood in the greatest Need of those useful Qualities (such was the Awe of *Emilia's* Presence, the Violence of his Passion, and the Fear of a Repulse) his Tongue falter'd, his Hands trembled, his Countenance chang'd, and his Mind was so agitated with

with a Diversity of Passions, that tho' he offer'd more than once to speak, he had not the Power to proceed. Sensible and asham'd of his Pusillanimity, yet his Passion, swelling for Utterance, so shock'd his Spirits, that tho' he endeavour'd to hide his Confusion by taking up his Cup to drink his Tea, yet even that serv'd only to demonstrate the Perturbation of his Mind; for as often as he lifted up the Cup, his Hand shook to that Degree, that, not being able to carry it to his Mouth, he was forc'd to set it down again. *Emilia* perceiv'd his Disorder, and guessing, yet seeming ignorant of the Cause of it, said, I am afraid you are not well, Sir; if you please I will call Mrs. *Friendly*. Madam, said *Portius*, I must confess I am seiz'd with a sudden Illness; I feel an unnatural Palpitation at my Heart, and an unwonted Depression of Spirits; however, as my Physician is present, who alone has the Skill to cure my Disease, I am not apprehensive of any dangerous Consequences. When the Cause of a Distemper is known, it's said, the Cure is half perform'd. O Love, how unaccountable is thy Power! how strange,
how

how contrary thy Effects! some it makes eloquent! me it has struck dumb! yet Silence, in some Cases, is more eloquent than the most elaborate Oratory. The Heart gives Vent to its Fulness in Sighs and Tears, or perhaps in broken and unconnected Expressions; when a knavish Design shall be set off and embellish'd with all the Flowers of Rhetorick; a bad Cause, indeed, needs such Helps, but a good one speaks for itself. Since then this evidently is my Case; since Love has a thousand Ways of demonstrating its Reality, when it is impossible for Language to describe it; pardon, fair Excellence, the Defects of my Tongue, which finds itself incapable of uttering the Passion of my Heart; but tho' my Love for you is past Expression, yet my Veneration is equal to my Love. I revere those Virtues and Excellencies which have enrich'd your Soul, and made it the Repository of all Manner of Happiness for that Man whom Heaven and you shall bless with such an inestimable Treasure.

Sir, said *Emilia*, I am very much surpriz'd, that a Gentleman of your excellent Sense and Understanding should

On such slight Grounds entertain so high an Opinion of one of whose Life and Morals I am sure you have but little Knowledge. Alas! Sir, how easy is it for Vice to assume the Form and Habit of Virtue? What a World of Mischief lies conceal'd under the Appearance of Probity and Innocence. What horrible Crimes, what detestable Villainies have been perpetrated under the Mask of Friendship and the most honourable Pretences. Your Judgment may be deceiv'd, and so may mine. However, I am willing to believe, that the Declaration you have now made to me is sincere and ingenuous; but whether it be so or not, I will deal sincerely with you, tho' perhaps in so doing your Regard for me will be very much abated. Behold, Sir, in me a Composition of Wretchedness and Folly; one who has drank deeply of the bitter Cup of Affliction; whose irregular Actions and Misconduct have render'd the most miserable of her Sex; whose Indiscretion has banish'd her from the Love and Protection of her Parents, and the Society of her dearest Friends. Unhappy *Horatio*! I must commend, tho' I rue thy
Justice:

Justice, in cutting off such an unworthy Member from thy Family.

Horatio ! said *Portius* hastily ; surely you don't mean *Horatio* of — *shire* ! Indeed, reply'd *Emilia*, he is the worthy Gentleman I mean, and myself his most unworthy Daughter. You surprize me, answer'd *Portius* ; 'tis true, I have no personal Acquaintance with *Horatio* ; but by Report he is in as much Esteem for his high Worth and uncommon Merits as any Gentleman in the whole County ; and I have heard my Father *Portius*, who was intimate with him, commend him for his many rare Qualities and Virtues. But, dear Lady, as you have been so candid as to confess thus much of yourself, will you gratify my Curiosity so far as to oblige me with the Particulars of your Story ? Alas ! Sir, said *Emilia*, how glad should I be, if the Memory of my past Actions were buried in eternal Oblivion ? Or if the Sufferings I have already felt could in any Measure mollify my Father's Anger, and induce him to receive me once more into his Favour ? But my Offences are of too

black a Dye for me to expect so great a Blessing. However, Sir, as you seem of a friendly Disposition, I believe you will not refuse to undertake so charitable an Office, as to prevail on my Father, inflexible as he is, to receive his afflicted repenting Daughter once more to his paternal Embraces. For this Reason, and this only, I will make no Scruple to disclose to you the very Truth in as plain and intelligible Terms as I can; nor will I omit any Fact or material Circumstance how injurious soever the Relation of it may prove to my own Character.

Full sixteen Months have pass'd over my Head since the Commencement of my Misfortunes; before which how severe and happy was every Moment of my Life? Gay and chearful was my Days; my Mind was void of Cares; nor anxious Thought disturb'd my Midnight Rest; Virtue and Innocence seem'd pleas'd with my Society; lov'd by my Parents, and caress'd by my Friends; and so might still have been, had I took Reason for my Counsellor, and advis'd with Prudence: But leaving these, I listen'd to the guileful Serpent, that promis'd Heaven,

Heaven, but robb'd me of my Paradise and all my Happiness together.

Here she related the Story of the Footman, the Arts and Schemes he practis'd to delude her; how she was prevail'd upon to marry him, and in what Manner, her Pregnancy, the Discovery of it by her Mother; her Father's Usage of her, and how he convey'd her in his Coach into a Wood; her travelling from thence to *London*; her taking Lodgings; how she came inform'd of the Death of her villainous Husband; her Delivery of a dead Child in the Country; in short, she recited every Thing she could recollect, and rather aggravated than attempted to conceal her Folly and Misconduct.

Thus, Sir, said she, I have given you a faithful, tho' melancholy Account of the poor, mis-led, unfortunate *Emilia*, who, trusting too much to the Strength of her own Judgment, has been taught by Experience, that Weakness is the Property of our Sex. Now, whether I deserve more your Pity or Contempt, I know not; but this I am sure of, that if whole Years of Sorrow and Repentance might be a Means of reinstating

me in my Father's good Graces, I would freely undergo any Penance to obtain such a Blessing. Having so said, a Flood of Tears gush'd from her Eyes, which hinder'd her proceeding any farther.

Portius was wonderfully affected at the Rehearſal of her Story; and being perſuaded, from the artleſs and unaffected Manner of her telling it, that what ſhe had declar'd was the very Truth, his Eſteem for her, inſtead of being leſſen'd, was greatly increas'd; and therefore, to comfort her, made her this Reply. Ma-
dam, ſaid he, dry up your Tears, and be ſatisfied that in me you ſhall find ſuch a Friend as you deſire. I promiſe you upon my Faith and Honour, that I will take the moſt effectual Meaſures to heal the Breach that your unfortunate Con-
duct has made betwixt your Father and you. In order to which, one Thing is neceſſary to be done on your Part, that is, to agree to the Propoſal I have to make. You have, it's true, paſſ'd a ſevere Censure on yourſelf; but I look upon thoſe Actions which you condemn in quite a different Light. Your In-
nocence has been betrayed by a Villain, who has receiv'd the juſt Reward of his
Iniquity.

Iniquity. Your Virtue, however, has not received any Diminution in its intrinsic Value, since your Judgment was impos'd upon, and you consented to his Solicitations only upon the Supposition that his Designs were just and honourable. That they were not so, was not your Fault, and has proved your Misfortune. My Love for you, therefore, is unalterably the same, and my Purpose is absolutely fix'd, that you, preferably to all others of your Sex, if you consent, alone shall bless my nuptial Bed. This will put me in a Situation of effectuating a Reconcilement with your Father, who, I am pretty well assured, will not think an Alliance with my Family any Disgrace to his.

Sir, said *Emilia*, your Offer is so free and generous, that it would look like Perverseness and Obstinacy in me, should I refuse to accept it. Providence seems again to smile upon me, and willing to reverse my Sufferings by some agreeable Turn of good Fortune. And shall I throw the proffer'd Blessing from me? Heaven forbid that I should be guilty of such Ingratitude! I may be wretched, but I will never be unthankful; nor will

I longer hesitate to put myself under your Direction. Be you then my Guide, my Protector, my Husband, my All; but remember you take me with all my Faults and Frailties. This only can I promise, that your Will shall always be my Law, and your Pleasure the Subject of my unwearied Care and Diligence.

Enough, said *Portius*, enough, my lovely Charmer. From this Moment date the End of all thy Troubles, and the Beginning of a long Flow of Happiness to come. To-morrow's Sun shall see us join'd in *Hymen's* holy Bands; soon after which we'll take our Journey to that ancient Seat where my brave Ancestors have flourish'd for some Ages past; from whence with all the Equipage befitting our Estate, we'll pay a Visit to the virtuous *Horatio* and the good *Sophronia*, present them with our Persons and our Duties, and on our Knees beseech their Blessing.

Portius was punctual to his Word, and left nothing unfulfill'd of all he promis'd. Thus were they both happy; *Portius* in the Acquisition of a most excellent Woman for his Wife, and *Emilia* in seeing such a fortunate Period to all her

her Adversities. But what most of all crown'd their Felicity was, that on presenting themselves to *Horatio* and *Sophronia*, him they found entirely dispos'd to a Reconciliation, and not a little pleas'd that Providence had thwarted his Design of cutting off and dismembring his darling Daughter from his Family and Blood; and as to *Sophronia*, the Joy and Surprize of seeing her Daughter again, after so long an Absence and a thousand Perplexities which the Ignorance of her Fate had occasion'd, was so great, that she was scarce able to support it; so that she could say no more than *O my dear Child!* —— and throwing her Arms about her Neck, hung upon her in that Manner for some Time, bathing her Face with Tears and Kisses. Nor did *Emilia* make less affectionate Returns of filial Love and Duty. In short, the Scene was inconceivably moving; every Heart overflow'd with Joy, yet such a Joy as fetch'd Tears from the Eyes of them all.

After the first Transports, which this unexpected Interview had occasion'd, were a little over, *Sophronia* ask'd her Daughter a thousand Questions in relation

lation to the Accidents that had befallen her since their last sorrowful Parting. *Emilia's* Reply was to this Effect: My most honoured Parents, on my Knees I implore your Pardon for my Offences, which with Sorrow and Grief of Heart I acknowledge myself guilty of. I am sensible that I have fail'd exceedingly in my Duty, and that what I have suffer'd in Consequence thereof, is but the natural and necessary Effect of my Disobedience. I never once, in my own impartial Judgment, condemn'd my Father of too much Harshness or Severity in his Dealings with me; but rather commended his Justice in punishing me according to my Deserts; nay more; I have the greatest Reason imaginable to thank him for his Goodness, in that at the same Time that he banish'd me from his Presence and Family, he did not leave me destitute of a Provision for my future Subsistence. But foreseeing the Necessities which my most unhappy Condition would necessarily expose me to, in his great Tenderness took Care to mitigate my Distress by his undeserved Bounty. For which unparalell'd Act of Goodness may the supreme Disposer of our Lives
and

and Destinies shower down his most peculiar Blessings on his reverend Head, and prolong his Life to a good old Age; may no Uneasiness or Anxiety disturb his peaceful Calm of Life, and when Death comes (O may that Day be long ere it arrive!) may he be received into the Mansions of everlasting Bliss, and enjoy the just Reward of such unexampled Piety and Virtue.

As to you my most dear and honour'd Mother, my Tears must tell, for I have not Words to express the deep Sense I have of your Love and unalter'd Affection for me notwithstanding my undutiful Behaviour and the bad Requital I have made for the Care and tender Regard you have always had for my Happiness and well-being. Could I have had but half the Concern for myself as you have ever shewn for me, and had put in Practice but a few of those good Precepts and Principles of Virtue which you so carefully implanted in my youthful Mind, and of which you yourself was an eminent Example, I should now have had no Cause to lament my Folly and Undutifulness which have brought upon you a Load of Sorrow and Affliction

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which

which I am but too sensible you have suffer'd on my Account. But alas! how rarely is Wisdom found in Youth? Fondly prepossess'd with Notions of their own Capacity, and dazzled with the Brightness of their Wit and imaginary Reach of Understanding, they fancy they are above Deception, and not liable to those Frauds and Impositions which are so common among the knavish and designing Part of Mankind. This was the Rock on which I split. By depending on my own Sufficiency I put it in the Power of a Villain to deceive and ruin me. Providence however, in pity to my injur'd Innocence, has punish'd the Deceiver, and revenged my Wrongs on the Head of the Criminal, by suffering him to add to the Guilt of despoiling me of my Honour, the atrocious Crime of robbing on the Highway, by which he forfeited his Life to the Law. And now, Madam, I will give you the Satisfaction you desire, and acquaint you with the Story of my Life ever since my Absence from you, and by what Means I am thus happily brought into your Presence again. Then she related the several Occurrences of her Pilgrimage,

from

from the Time her Father left her in the Wood, to her Marriage with *Portius*. *Portius*, added she, was so blind to my past Follies that notwithstanding the Representations I made of my own Unworthiness, and the Follies I had been guilty of (for I concealed nothing from him) yet was pleas'd to like me with all my Faults. To him I owe my Deliverance from that State of Solitude and Oblivion to which I had devoted myself, and in which I had resolved to spend the Remainder of my Days; and to him you owe the Recovery of your lost and abandon'd Daughter.

While *Emilia* was delivering herself in this affecting Manner, *Horatio* found his Heart smit with Compunction for the Hardships and Afflictions which she had suffer'd by his Severity. He could refrain no longer, but catching her in his Arms, kiss'd and embrac'd her with the utmost Tenderness and Affection. My dear Child, said he, what Recompence shall I make thee for all the Troubles and Hardships which my Rashness has occasion'd thee? I am now convinc'd that Allowances ought to be made for the Extravagancies of Youth. For then

it is that the Passions are strongest, and the Judgment, not settled by Experience and the Knowledge of Mankind, is most liable to Deception. Then it is that sensible Objects make the greatest Impression upon the Mind, and Reason is too much obscur'd by the Prevalence of Passion. Then it is that Virtue, tho' planted in the most fruitful Soil, will soon be choaked up with Weeds, unless continually prun'd and cultivated by the skilful Hand of Prudence and Authority. We who are far advanc'd in Years, have our Judgments matur'd by a long Experience and Knowledge of the Follies, Frailties and Wickedness of Mankind, and therefore are always on our Guard against them. But Youth wanting these Advantages, is, consequently, more liable to err. This Parents ought to consider, and not expect that their Children should commence Philosophers, immediately after they have left their School. But enough of this: Welcome, *Emilia*, welcome once more to thy Father's aged Arms. *Portius*, my Son, for so the Fates ordain, here, take this Girl, and use her well: for I am perswaded she will deserve thy Love; and may the
 God

God of Heaven bless you both with
Length of Life and Happiness together.

Horatio was so well pleas'd with this
happy Issue of his Daughter's Misfortunes,
that he resolves to celebrate her Nuptials
with the utmost Magnificence. Accord-
ingly he sends for all his Children, and
invites the principal Gentry for twenty
Miles round the Country, and entertains
them in the most splendid Manner for
three Days successively. After which
Portius took his dear *Emilia* to his
Mansion-house, where they still live in
the full Enjoyment of all earthly Felicity,
and the mutual Endearments of conjugal
Affection, bless'd with a numerous Off-
spring.

John Ford

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that command on that
I don't know the no. 1000*

John Ford

God of Heaven bless you both with
Length of Life and Happiness together.
Harris was so well pleas'd with this
happy Time of his Daughter's Marriage,
that he resolv'd to celebrate her Nuptials
with the utmost Magnificence. Accord-
ingly he sent for all his Children, and
invited the principal Gentry for twenty
Miles round the Country, and entertain'd
them in the most splendid Manner for
three Days successively. After which
Festive took his dear Family to his
Manor-house, where they still live in
the full Enjoyment of all earthly Felicity,
and the natural Increase of copious
Affection, pleas'd with a numerous Off-



